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Patients rate their experiences in NSW emergency departments

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) has today released survey results reflecting the experiences of almost 16,000 patients in NSW emergency departments (EDs) in 2017–2018.

BHI Chief Executive, Dr Diane Watson, said most patients provided positive ratings of their experiences of care in the 82 EDs included in the Emergency Department Patient Survey.

“Overall, almost nine in 10 respondents to our survey rated their care in EDs as very good or good,” said Dr Watson. “Seven in 10 patients also told us they would speak highly of the care they received if asked by friends and family.”

Patients also provided positive ratings of the healthcare professionals who delivered their care in the EDs.

“Around eight in 10 patients said ED professionals always explained things in a way they could understand, while more than eight in 10 said they were always treated with respect and dignity,” said Dr Watson.

The survey results also show areas where improvements could be made to the delivery of care, including patients’ experiences when leaving the ED and how well prepared they felt to continue to manage their condition at home.

“Around seven in 10 patients (72%) said they definitely felt involved in decisions about their discharge, down from 76% in the previous year’s survey, while a similar percentage of patients (71%) felt they were definitely given enough information to manage their care at home,” said Dr Watson.

“When we look across the state, we see considerable differences in the results for individual emergency departments throughout the state. These results present a great opportunity for healthcare providers to learn from what their patients are telling us and identify areas where there are opportunities to improve.”

A *Snapshot* report highlights key findings on the experiences of patients of all ages who attended EDs in NSW in 2017–18, with detailed results in supplementary data tables.

Full survey results, including for all 82 individual EDs, are available in BHI’s interactive data portal, Healthcare Observer.