

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Report helps identify opportunities to better manage chronic disease

Serious chronic heart and lung conditions were responsible for nearly 30,000 potentially avoidable admissions and 170,000 bed days in NSW public hospitals last year, a new Bureau of Health Information report shows.

The report, *Chronic Disease Care: A piece of the picture*, examines potentially avoidable admissions for Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in 79 NSW public hospitals. It finds the overwhelming majority of these admissions occur through emergency departments and peak in winter.

Part of the Bureau's *Insights Series*, the report gives hospitals information about how these serious conditions affect them compared with their peers. It draws attention to communities most likely to benefit from models of care that could help reduce these admissions.

"Hospital admissions for these conditions are potentially avoidable in two main ways, either through disease prevention or, after someone has developed the disease, preventing its escalation to the point where they need to be hospitalised," Bureau Chief Executive Dr Diane Watson said.

"But this report is a valuable step in identifying opportunities to prevent these conditions from escalating so people can stay well and at home with their families."

In NSW there are about 174,000 people with COPD and 83,000 with CHF. High admission rates for these conditions do not necessarily reflect hospital quality or performance. Some hospitals might see more of these patients because they provide specialised care for them. These admissions can also be influenced by factors outside a hospital's control, such as access to primary care, patient circumstances and the season.

Hospitals and primary care services however, can both play a role in reducing admissions. Providing hospitals with more information about their number and mix of these patients, and how long they stay, can help identify opportunities to better manage them.

Across NSW, CHF and COPD bed days have decreased over five years, but there remain communities that would benefit from reducing these hospital admissions.

The Agency for Clinical Innovation will use the Bureau's report to identify communities and hospitals most affected by potentially avoidable admissions and work with them to implement a model of care to improve patient outcomes. Bureau Performance Profiles showing potentially avoidable admissions at 79 hospitals are available at [www.bhi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bhi.nsw.gov.au)

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