

Backgrounder

INSIGHTS INTO CARE

PATIENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON NSW PUBLIC HOSPITALS

About the report

The Bureau of Health Information's report *Insights into Care: Patients' Perspectives on NSW Public Hospitals* looks closely at the care experiences of the patients who spend a day, or one or more nights, in NSW public hospitals each year.

Fast facts

- The Bureau's first report uses data from the largest patient survey program in Australia. The NSW Health Patient Survey includes over 80 questions covering a range of experiences including wait times, use of medication and admission and discharge processes. The report uses feedback from over 20,000 patients treated in NSW public hospitals in 2009.
- The first report focuses on one of the recommendations of the Garling inquiry – to provide doctors and nurses with accurate and comparable information about what matters to patients so patient care can be improved.
- The report found what matters most to patients is teamwork – how well doctors and nurses work together.
- The report provides comparative information across large public hospitals* about the **care experiences that matter to patients:**
 - Staff teamwork
 - Courtesy of nurses
 - Courtesy of the person who admitted the patient
 - Treated with dignity and respect
 - Cleanliness of the room
 - Hospital well organised
 - Availability of nurses

- By providing information for each large public hospital, healthcare workers learn how patients rate key care experiences and this gives insights on where hospital staff and the system can improve.
- Hospitals with higher or lower patient ratings of care are located across NSW.
- Detailed analysis by area health service and large public hospitals of overall care and key care experiences can be found at www.bhi.nsw.gov.au.

What the report shows

This report tells us that to NSW patients excellence in hospital care is more than professional competency and appropriate use of technology – it is about a caring culture.

Most patients across NSW have positive care experiences

In 2009 most patients who spent one or more nights in hospital (overnight patients) and completed the 2009 survey rated care as excellent (34%), very good (34%) or good (22%). A minority reported it to be fair (8%) or poor (3%).

Patients who spent a day receiving a test, surgery or other procedure (day only patients) rated care as excellent (42%), very good (36%) or good (17%), while a minority reported it to be fair (4%) or poor (1%).

Patient ratings of care experiences across area health services and large public hospitals in NSW are available from the Bureau in the *NSW Area Health Services Report* and the *NSW Public Hospitals Report* at www.bhi.nsw.gov.au.

* Large public hospitals refers to principal referral, major metropolitan and major non metropolitan hospitals.

Staff teamwork matters most to patients

Among patients who offered excellent ratings, how well the doctors and nurses worked together was the main factor that influenced their rating.

Among patients who offered fair or poor ratings, again how well the doctors and nurses worked together was the most influential factor.

In NSW many overnight patients rated staff teamwork as excellent (29%) and a larger proportion of day only patients rated staff teamwork as excellent (38%).

Less than two per cent of patients who gave fair or poor ratings to overall care rated staff teamwork as excellent.

No one area health service outperforms the others and hospitals with high and low patient ratings of care are located across NSW

There is no area health service in NSW that outperforms or underperforms in all elements of care experiences –

although North Coast Area Health Service is a high performer in most areas. Lower performing area health services are still home to hospitals where high patient ratings of care are found.

The Bureau identifies large public hospitals with higher or lower patient ratings of care on the basis of the highest and lowest 20 per cent.

Excellence exists in NSW public hospitals

At Mt Druitt hospital around four in 10 surveyed patients who stayed overnight gave excellent ratings to the care they received and at Calvary Mater Newcastle around six in 10 day only patients gave excellent ratings.

However, at hospitals with lower patient ratings of care, around two in 10 patients offer excellent ratings.

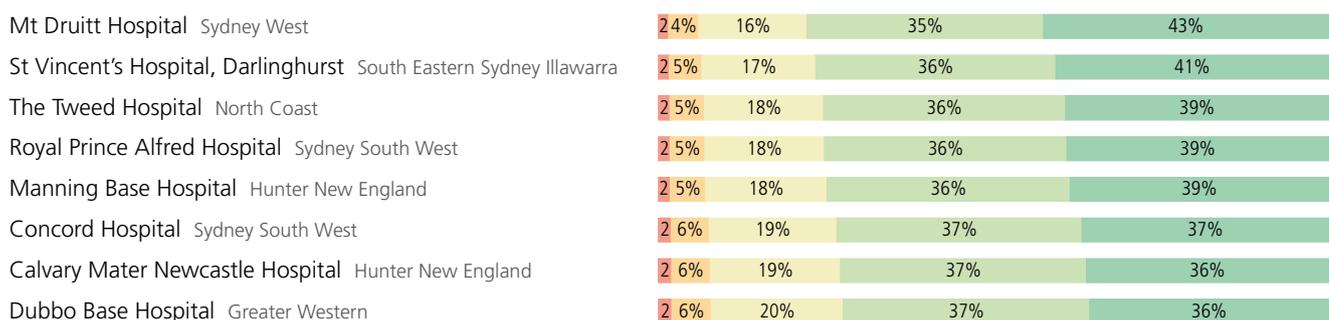
Public hospitals with higher or lower patient ratings of care are located across NSW

Figure 1 Comparisons of standardised ratings of overnight patients' care experiences in large public hospitals in 2009

How do overnight patients rate overall care in:

Overnight patients are individuals who stayed for one or more nights in a public hospital.

Public hospitals with higher patient ratings



Public hospitals with lower patient ratings

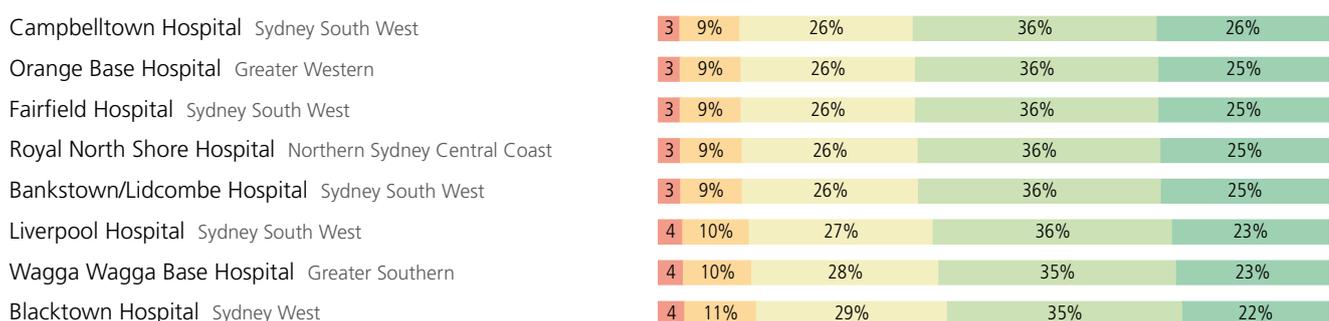
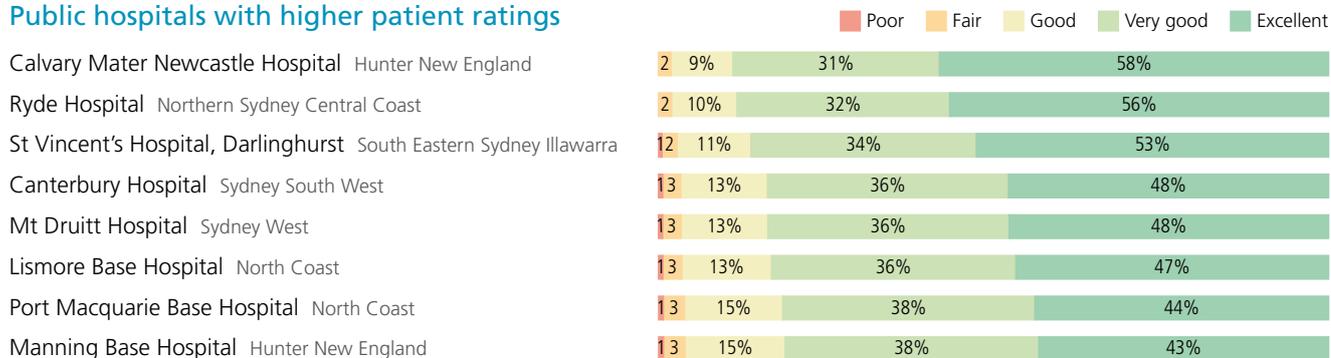


Figure 2 Comparisons of standardised ratings of day only patients' care experiences in large public hospitals in 2009

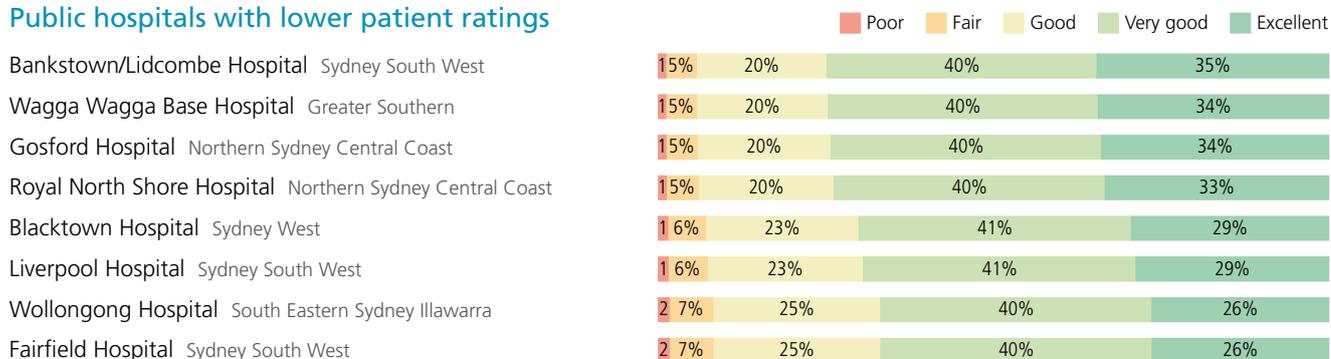
Day only patients are individuals who spent the day in a public hospital receiving a test, surgery or other procedure.

How do day only patients rate overall care in:

Public hospitals with higher patient ratings



Public hospitals with lower patient ratings



Standardisation to support fairer comparisons

To support fair comparisons, patient ratings of care experiences have been standardised statistically to show how hospitals would rate if they served very similar populations of patients. The process of standardisation is important because different hospitals provide services to different kinds of people with different illnesses and severity of illness. These differences can affect patients' ratings of care independently of the quality of the care healthcare workers give patients during their stay in hospital.

Download the report

The report, *Insights into Care: Patients' Perspectives on NSW Public Hospitals*, related reports and supplements are available on the Bureau's website at www.bhi.nsw.gov.au.

The suite of products includes:

- *Insights into Care: Patients' Perspectives on NSW Public Hospitals*
- *Insights into Care: At a Glance*
- *Insights into Care: NSW Area Health Services Report*
- *Insights into Care: NSW Public Hospitals Report*
- *Insights into Care: Data Quality Supplement*
- *Insights into Care: Technical Supplement.*

About the Bureau of Health Information

The Bureau of Health Information was established following the *Special Commission of Inquiry into Acute Care Services in NSW Public Hospitals* (Garling inquiry) to report on quality and safety of patient care.

This is the first of the Bureau's reports and others will follow quarterly. They will focus on issues such as hospital care, including emergency and surgical care, as well as compare the NSW public health system with similar systems.

The Bureau is an independent, board-governed organisation established by the NSW Government to be the leading source of information on the performance of the public health system in NSW.

The Bureau will provide the community, health care professionals and the NSW Parliament with timely, accurate and comparable information about the performance of the NSW public health system in ways that enhance the system's accountability and inform efforts to increase its beneficial impact on the health and well-being of people in NSW.

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