

Year in Review

2018-19





BUREAU OF HEALTH INFORMATION

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The Bureau of Health Information is a board-governed organisation that produces independent reports on the performance of the healthcare system in NSW.

Using advanced data analytics and visualisation, we deliver reports and information products that describe key aspects of healthcare performance for a range of consumer, healthcare and policy audiences.

We provide this information to strengthen accountability and support system-wide and local improvements in patients' healthcare experiences and outcomes.

Public reporting of this information enhances transparency and understanding of healthcare performance for consumers and local communities.

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) is led by Board Chair, Professor Carol Pollock, and Chief Executive, Dr Diane Watson.

Trusted information. Informed decisions. Improved healthcare.

From the Chair

In 2018–19, the Bureau of Health Information (BHI) set the course for its future with its new Strategic Plan 2019–2022.

The Board was delighted to approve a new strategic plan, which coincided with BHI's tenth year as an independent and trusted provider of healthcare performance information.

Developed with extensive input from stakeholders, the plan will guide BHI's work to enhance the provision of timely, accurate and comparable information on the performance of the NSW healthcare system.

Through purposeful engagement and collaboration, BHI's work will continue to align with and respond to health system priorities, providing actionable insights in areas that matter to patients.

BHI also launched the *NSW Patient Survey Program Strategy 2019–2022* to ensure the program develops in ways that maximise its unique value to the NSW health system for the benefit of health consumers.

I would like to thank our Chief Executive, Dr Diane Watson for her leadership and inspiration of BHI's highly-skilled team.

I also acknowledge the contribution of fellow Board members. Their considered advice and expertise has underpinned BHI's successes.

Professor Carol Pollock
Board Chair



From the Chief Executive

BHI provided high-quality, meaningful information that aligns with, and responds to, health system priorities in 2018–19.

BHI's reports are the cornerstone of our work and it has been another busy and productive year, with the public release of 12 reports, associated information products, and many notable developments.

BHI's *Healthcare in Focus* report examined healthcare performance in NSW for more than 60 measures, with one-third of those measures dedicated to enhancing understanding about healthcare and opportunities to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people.

The January to March 2019 issue of *Healthcare Quarterly* included, for the first time, ambulance performance measures for 91 local areas in NSW rather than the 18 ambulance zones previously reported on, providing communities with more local and meaningful information on ambulance activity and response times.

In 2018–19 BHI continued to manage and expand the NSW Patient Survey Program, asking almost 300,000 patients about their experiences of care in the NSW health system.

Detailed survey results at hospital, local health district (LHD) and NSW levels were published on BHI's website and summarised in six Snapshot reports, which highlighted key findings.

As part of our extensive work on measuring and reporting patient experiences, BHI developed key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the experiences of care for admitted patients, which have now been adopted in LHD Service Agreements.

BHI supplies these KPI results to the NSW Ministry of Health on a quarterly basis, along with continuing to provide stakeholders, such as LHDs, with advice and data that helps inform their efforts to improve care for patients and communities throughout NSW.

A very important piece of work began when BHI initiated a three-year joint program with the Centre for Aboriginal Health to enhance information on Aboriginal patients' experiences and outcomes of care. This work will provide valuable insights that can help inform the care provided to Aboriginal people in our hospitals.



Having served as BHI's inaugural Chief Executive from 2009 to 2012, I am delighted to once again be Chief Executive as BHI turns 10 years old. Under our new *Strategic Plan 2019–2022*, BHI will work with stakeholders to ensure we continue to provide high-quality, meaningful information that aligns with, and responds to, health system priorities.

I would like to acknowledge and thank all of our dedicated and talented staff, and our Board, for their contributions to another very positive year.

Dr Diane Watson
Chief Executive

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

BHI Strategic Plan 2019–2022

BHI will seek to align its work programs more closely with the priorities of our consumer, health professional and policy audiences, and openly engage and respond to them.

The *Strategic Plan 2019–2022* marks 10 years since the Bureau of Health Information (BHI) was established by the NSW Government to deliver timely, accurate and comparable information on the performance of the NSW public healthcare system.

The new plan was developed with extensive input from a wide range of stakeholders.

In line with the plan, BHI will continue to provide the community, health professionals and policy makers with information that enhances healthcare system performance transparency in NSW, informing actions to improve the safety and quality of healthcare, and strengthening accountability.

BHI's success in achieving its strategic priorities will be measured against key performance indicators (KPIs) that include:

- stakeholder perception of BHI's reporting and information products as trustworthy
- stakeholders reporting that BHI information informs actions or decisions
- stakeholder perception of the effectiveness of BHI in fulfilling its purpose
- results of the annual Employee Engagement Index.

BHI aims to work more closely with those within the health system on information for improvement, while maintaining our objectivity and editorial independence.

BHI has also identified opportunities to:

- improve the relevance and helpfulness of our information products
- significantly enhance our website and data portal, making information easy to find, interpret and use.



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

NSW Patient Survey Program Strategy 2019–2022

BHI aims to maximise our impact on behalf of NSW patients and communities, and enhance our value to the NSW health system.

The *NSW Patient Survey Program Strategy* was designed to ensure the program develops in ways that maximise its impact to the benefit of patients and delivers unique value for the NSW health system.

The NSW Patient Survey Program provides information to the community, healthcare leaders and policy makers that enables fair comparison at hospital and system level. Statistically-valid benchmarks and trends enhance transparency and accountability for the performance of the healthcare system.

The strategy aims to redefine the role and distinct contribution of the NSW Patient Survey Program in a contemporary landscape over the next three years.

The strategy has been informed by extensive input from a wide range of stakeholders, internal operational reviews and a scan of developments and challenges in similar programs nationally and internationally.



LISTENING AND LEARNING

NSW Patient Survey Program

BHI asked almost 300,000 patients about their experiences of care in the NSW health system during 2018–19.

We continued to manage and expand the NSW Patient Survey Program to support integrating patient feedback into health system improvements.

The survey program is a rich source of information on patient experience, which BHI makes publicly available on our website, through our interactive data portal Healthcare Observer, and in many of the reports and associated information products we publish.

We sent questionnaires to people across a range of care settings, including to adults admitted to hospital, children and young people admitted to hospital, people who visited emergency departments, women who recently gave birth, and people attending outpatient cancer clinics.

BHI conducted a second annual survey of 35,000 patients across ten disease groups to provide patient experience and outcome data to the NSW Health Leading Better Value Care program. This data will become part of the Register of Outcomes, Value and Experience (ROVE) that represents one of the most detailed linked datasets in Australia.

BHI also collected patient-reported data for the evaluation of the NSW Health Integrated Care Program. BHI conducted census sampling of 27,000 patients across more than 50 different pilot projects across NSW, using a bespoke survey containing patient experience, outcomes and self-efficacy/empowerment measures.

During 2018–19, BHI published the following survey results:

- Adult Admitted Patients 2017
- Admitted Children and Young Patients 2017
- Maternity Care 2017
- BreastScreen NSW Client Experience Survey
- Outpatient Cancer Clinics 2017
- Emergency Department Patient Survey 2017–18.



Admitted Children and Young Patients Survey



Adult Admitted Patient Survey



Emergency Department Patient Survey



Maternity Care Survey



Outpatients Cancer Clinics Survey

LISTENING AND LEARNING

Aboriginal Patient Experience Program

More Aboriginal patients than ever before are being asked about their hospital experiences.

BHI is actively expanding efforts through our NSW Patient Survey Program to learn more from Aboriginal people about their experiences in public hospitals – providing important information to healthcare professionals that they can use to help improve care.

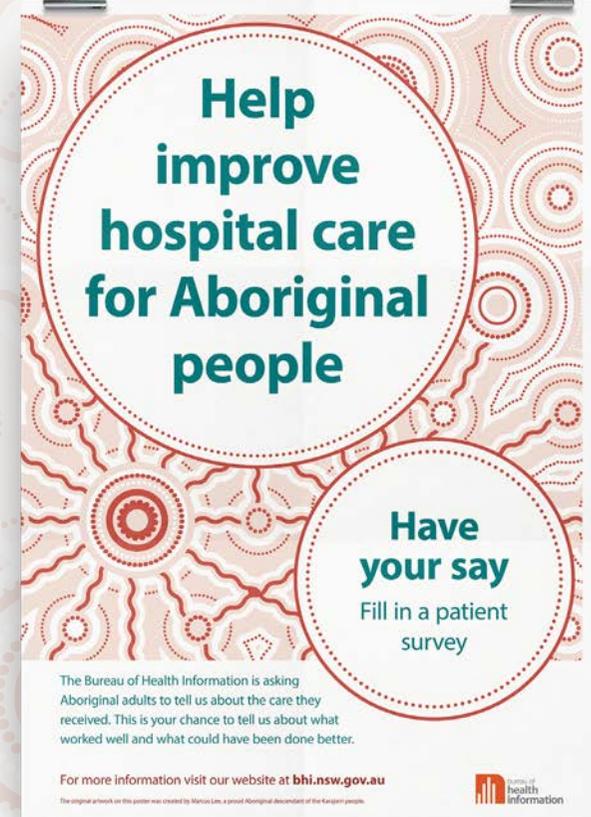
To facilitate this, BHI has partnered with the NSW Ministry of Health's Centre for Aboriginal Health (CAH) to ask more Aboriginal patients than ever about their experiences in NSW hospitals.

Throughout 2019, and for the first time, every adult patient who identifies as Aboriginal is being invited to provide feedback on their admitted patient or maternity care experience. This will allow us to report in 2020 on the experiences of Aboriginal patients at hospital and local health district (LHD) level, and present trends over time.

The three-year collaboration between BHI and CAH – known as the Aboriginal Patient Experience Survey Program and guided by an expert advisory committee – will feature a number of initiatives to help inform improvements to healthcare for Aboriginal people in NSW.

BHI, in collaboration with CAH, developed a suite of promotional materials for LHDs and other health services to raise awareness of the Aboriginal patient experience survey and tell them about the value of responding.

In addition, a tailored set of questions is being developed for use from 2020 to ensure Aboriginal patients have the opportunity to provide feedback on experiences of care that are particularly important to them.



OUR REPORTS

Snapshots

In line with BHI's Strategic Plan, Snapshot reports are produced to deliver more timely and succinct information. The reports summarise patient survey results and highlight key findings, with detailed results at hospital, local health district and NSW levels available in supplementary data tables and through BHI's interactive data portal, Healthcare Observer.



Emergency Department
Patient Survey 2017–18

Almost **16,000**
people told us about their
experiences at
emergency departments
in NSW in 2017–18

Almost nine in 10 patients
(88%) said, overall, the care
they received was

'very good'



'good'



Adult Admitted
Patient Survey 2017

More than **21,000**
patients told us about
their experiences in
public hospitals
in NSW in 2017

Almost all patients
(94%) said, overall, the care
they received was

'very good'



'good'



Outpatient Cancer Clinics
Survey 2017

More than **11,000**
people told us about
their experiences at
outpatient cancer clinics
in NSW in 2017

Almost all patients
(99%) said, overall, the care
they received was

'very good'



'good'



OUR REPORTS

Snapshots



BreastScreen NSW Client Experience Survey 2017

More than **10,000** women told us about their experiences receiving a screening mammogram with BreastScreen NSW

Almost all women (98%) said, overall, their experience was

'very good'



'good'



Maternity Care Survey 2017

Almost **5,000** women told us about their experiences of maternity care in NSW public hospitals in 2017

Almost all women (95%) said, overall, the care they received during labour and birth was

'very good'



'good'



Admitted Children and Young Patients Survey 2017

More than **11,000** children and their parents told us about children's experiences in public hospitals in NSW in 2017

The care they received in hospital was rated as 'very good' or 'good' by

69% 
of parents of children aged 0-7

73% 
of parents of children aged 8-15

50% 
of children aged 8-15

53% 
of young people aged 16-17

OUR REPORTS

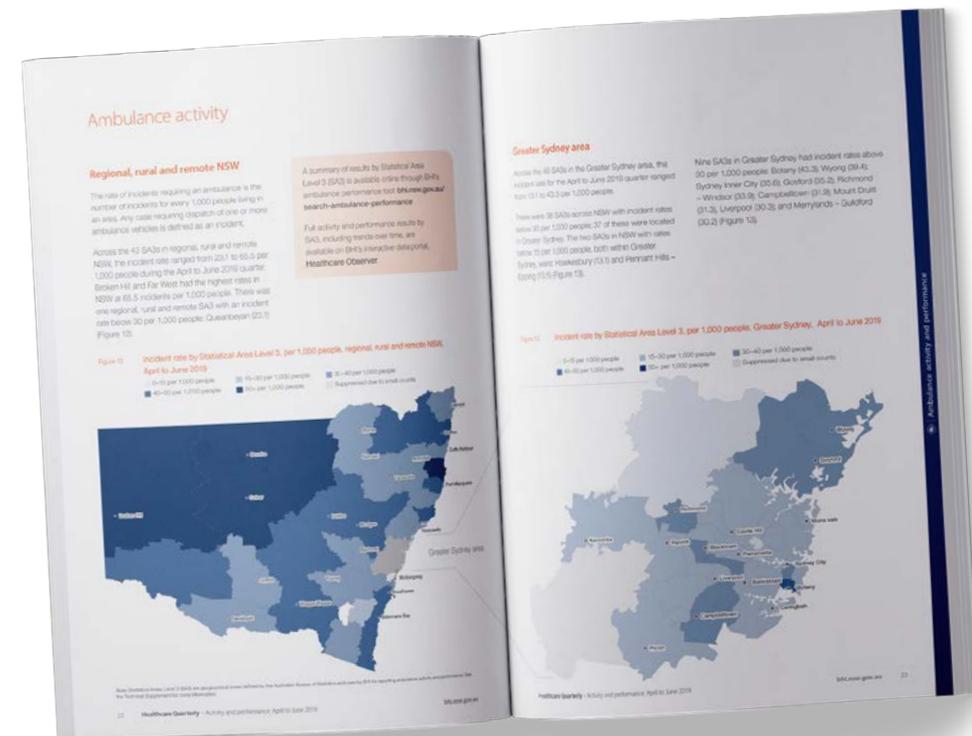
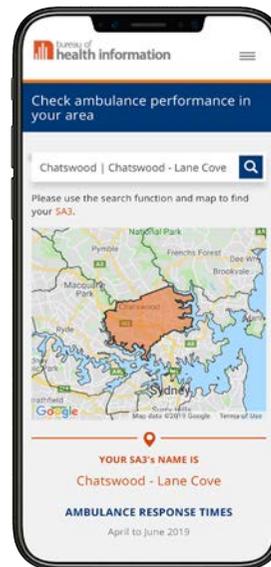
Healthcare Quarterly

Every day more than 8,000 people attend a NSW emergency department and there are around 3,300 ambulance responses.

Healthcare Quarterly tracks activity and performance across public hospitals and ambulance services in NSW. There were some notable developments in the way information was provided in 2018–19:

- An additional 44 rural emergency departments (EDs) were included, bringing the total number of EDs included in *Healthcare Quarterly* to 175 facilities.
- For the first time, *Healthcare Quarterly* began reporting activity for inpatient episodes involving mental health treatment.
- Ambulance reporting increased from 18 zones to 91 geographical areas across the state, providing more localised and meaningful information.

BHI tailors reporting to different audiences, presenting *Healthcare Quarterly* results through a main report and more detailed supporting information, including individual hospital profiles. Full results are available through BHI's interactive data portal, Healthcare Observer.



OUR REPORTS

Healthcare in Focus

BHI's *Healthcare in Focus* report looks at healthcare performance in NSW and this year there was a particular focus on Aboriginal people's experiences of care.

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) provides an annual report to the Minister and Parliament on the performance of the New South Wales (NSW) public health system. This edition of *Healthcare in Focus* offered insights regarding the accessibility, appropriateness and effectiveness of the NSW public health system.

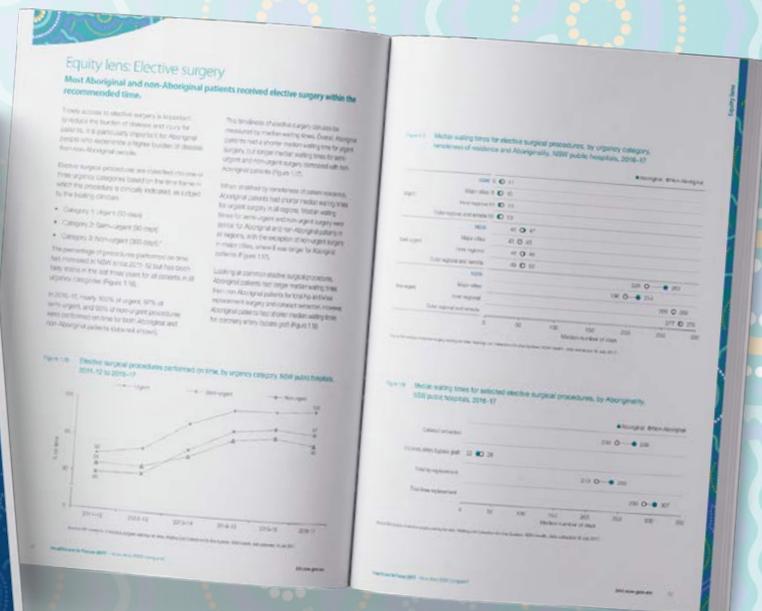
In 2016–17, among 7.8 million people in NSW, there were 1.1 million overnight public hospital stays and 884,000 visits to a public hospital for same-day care. There were 2.7 million emergency department (ED) attendances and 1.1 million calls to NSW Ambulance.

Of more than 60 measures of performance in the report, one third related to the experiences and outcomes of Aboriginal people.

Among patients admitted to NSW public hospitals, a lower proportion of Aboriginal people (58%) rated their care as "very good", compared to non-Aboriginal people (65%). Aboriginal patients were less positive about interpersonal

aspects of care, such as being treated with dignity and respect, having their cultural beliefs respected, and having confidence in the doctors and nurses treating them.

Comparisons of health system performance across local areas within NSW were made to further assess equity. Local and international comparisons of performance were used to identify good practice and outcomes, and highlight opportunities to improve.



OUR REPORTS

Measurement Matters

BHI published a report on the development of patient experience key performance indicators (KPIs) for local health districts (LHDs) in NSW.

BHI was asked by NSW Ministry of Health to develop a set of patient experience KPIs for admitted patients.

BHI demonstrated that instead of the single question used in the past, three new measures can provide a broader assessment of some of the most important elements of patient experience:

- an overall patient experience index which includes four survey questions
- a patient engagement index which includes six survey questions
- a respect and dignity single question score.

Following a review of BHI's results, the NSW Ministry of Health adopted the two index scores as KPIs for admitted patients in the 2018–19 Service Agreements with LHDs and adopted the respect and dignity score as an improvement measure. BHI now supplies this information to the NSW Ministry of Health on a quarterly basis.



ALIGNMENT AND RESPONSIVENESS

Through purposeful engagement and collaboration, BHI aligns with and responds to health system priorities.

Engagement

In 2018-19, we engaged with Ministry and LHD stakeholders, including directors of mental health, prior to commencing quarterly reporting on seclusion and restraint in NSW public hospitals.

We also engaged with clinicians and LHD directors of clinical governance to seek feedback on our forthcoming three-year risk standardised reports on mortality and readmissions.

BHI engaged with Ministry, LHD and pillar stakeholders for our new and enhanced methods for standardising patient survey results. A new quarterly NSW Patient Survey Program Newsletter was introduced, which updates our stakeholders on the latest program developments.

Alongside its engagement on public reporting, BHI continued to meet requests to provide advice and data to stakeholders to help inform their efforts to improve care for patients and communities throughout NSW.

BHI staff represented the organisation on a range of expert committees in NSW and interstate, while BHI's Chief Executive and expert staff presented at Australian and international conferences, forums, workshops and meetings.

Pillars

BHI worked pro-actively with the Agency for Clinical Innovation to better understand the information needs of clinicians, and to raise awareness of – and encourage them to use – analyses relating to mortality and returns to acute care

BHI and the Clinical Excellence Commission convened a workshop to explore the nature and extent of public reporting on hospital safety measures in NSW and issues this may raise from a consumer standpoint.

We supported the Cancer Institute of NSW in using patient survey information and engaged with managers of cancer services across the system.

BHI collaborated with the Agency for Clinical Innovation and the Clinical Excellence Commission and several other health bodies in organising the successful 2019 Patient Experience Symposium.

Advisory committees

BHI continued to work with our Scientific Advisory Committee, which comprises 10 leading international experts who help us ensure that our activities, strategies and plans are consistent with current best practice. BHI has several project-specific advisory committees that provided expert input and advice on different aspects of projects. We also meet and consult with subject matter experts regularly throughout the course of projects:

- Mental Health Advisory Group for our first major report on use and experiences of health services by people with lived experience of mental health issues
- Aboriginal Patient Experience Survey Program Advisory Committee, supporting a three-year program of work, which is co-chaired with the Centre for Aboriginal Health
- Patient Safety Measurement Advisory Group to support work on assessing the reliability of a number of different safety indicators
- BHI Mortality and Returns to Acute Care Advisory Group
- Rural Hospital Patient Survey Advisory Committee supporting development of a rural hospitals survey.

OUR WORK

External Stakeholders Survey

Almost 90% of external stakeholders say BHI assesses and reports objectively and fairly.

Each year BHI conducts a survey of external stakeholders to help us assess how well we are performing and how we can improve our value to the system.

This year it was sent to 379 stakeholders in NSW Ministry of Health, LHDs, Pillars and other partner organisations, the academic community, and peers in the performance measurement and public reporting fields.

The results show BHI has met or exceeded its targets in five of the six key performance indicators (KPIs) included in BHI's Strategic Plan: 2015–19.

87% agreed that BHI assesses and reports objectively and fairly on the performance of the NSW public health system (target: 90%)



83% rated BHI's achievements in fulfilling its purpose as excellent, very good or good (the 2016 baseline was 74%).



75% were satisfied with the way BHI has engaged with them (target: 75%)



86% rated positively the validity and strength of our performance measures (target: 75%)



82% rated positively the relevance and meaningfulness of our performance measures (target: 75%)



84% agreed that BHI reports and information products are clear and easy to understand (target: 80%)



88% agreed that BHI is trustworthy (target: 85%).



OUR PEOPLE

People Matter Survey

Results of the latest People Matter Survey showed very positive scores for BHI and improvement in key areas.

In May 2019 the People Matter Survey was conducted across the NSW public sector, giving employees an important opportunity to have a say about their workplace and help make it a better place to work.

The BHI employee engagement index stands at 76% which is 3% higher than last year and the highest index across all NSW Health organisations.

With a response rate from BHI staff of 98%, the results show that for 73 comparable questions, 42 were answered more positively than 2018; 23 were answered less positively; and seven were unchanged.

Compared with 2018 results, questions that showed most improvement at BHI included:

- We have a strong personal attachment to our organisation (81% of BHI staff agree, up from 53% one year ago)
- Our organisation inspires us to do the best in our jobs (76% agree, up from 62%)
- Our jobs give us feelings of personal accomplishment (79% agree, up from 68%)
- There is good team spirit in our workgroups (82% agree, up from 72%).

Almost eight in 10 BHI employees (79%) said they believed that action would be taken on the results of this survey, significantly higher than the overall public sector result (39%).

The improvements in BHI's results could not have been achieved without the contributions and commitment of our staff, including our Workforce Action Group and Social Committee. We will continue to work on areas where there is room for improvement.

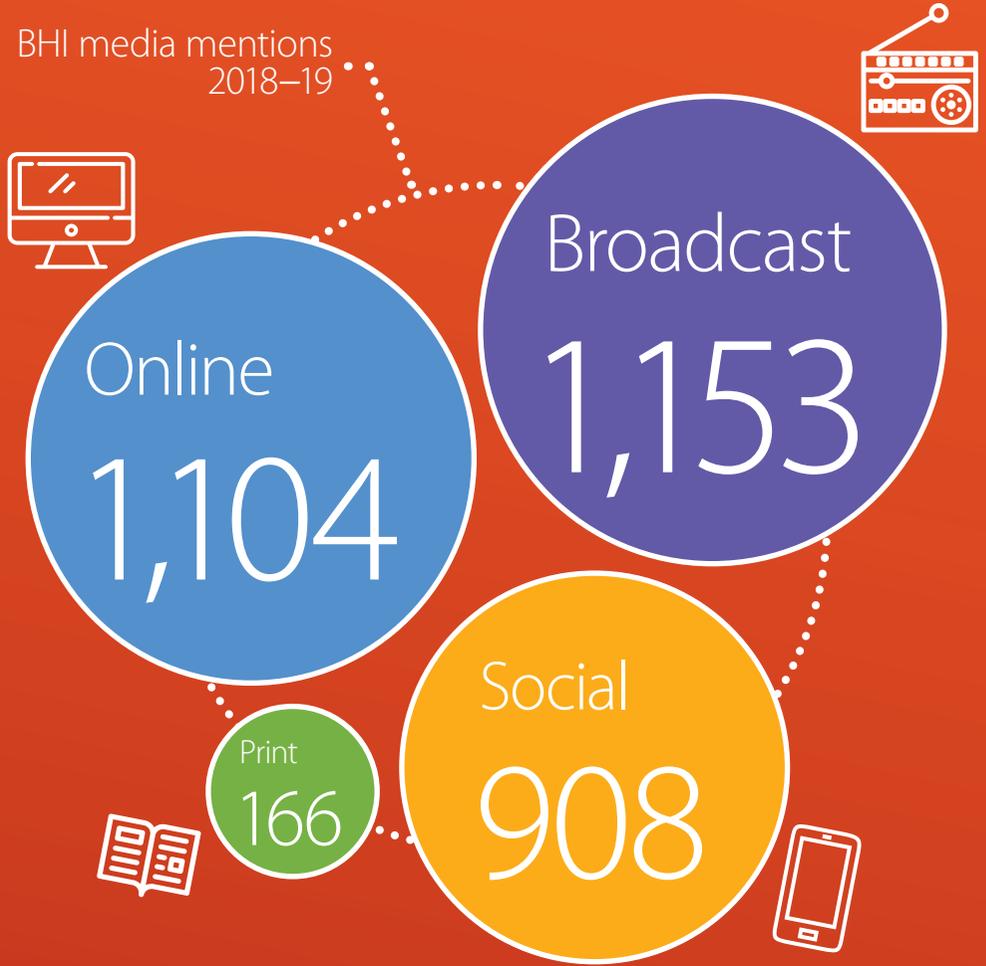
Highest of all NSW Health organisations



Up 3 percentage points from 2018

Who did we reach?

12 public reports



75,400

visits to our website

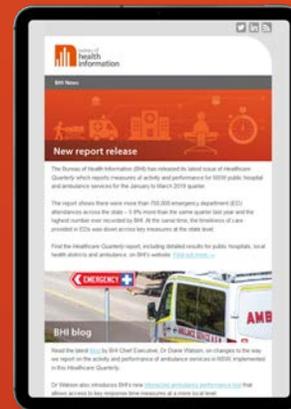
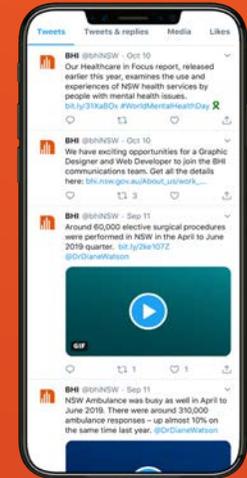


196,000

page views
Average 181 website visitors per day

1,500

Twitter
followers



1,200

e-newsletter
subscribers



About the Bureau of Health Information

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) is a board-governed organisation that provides independent information about the performance of the NSW healthcare system.

BHI was established in 2009 and supports the accountability of the healthcare system by providing regular and detailed information to the community, government and healthcare professionals. This in turn supports quality improvement by highlighting how well the healthcare system is functioning and where there are opportunities to improve.

BHI manages the NSW Patient Survey Program, gathering information from patients about their experiences and outcomes of care in public hospitals and other healthcare facilities.

BHI publishes a range of reports and information products, including interactive tools, that provide objective, accurate and meaningful information about how the health system is performing.

BHI's work relies on the efforts of a wide range of healthcare, data and policy experts. All of our assessment efforts leverage the work of hospital coders, analysts, technicians and healthcare providers who gather, codify and supply data. Our public reporting of performance information is enabled and enhanced by the infrastructure, expertise and stewardship provided by colleagues from NSW Health and its pillar organisations.

bhi.nsw.gov.au