

MEDIA RELEASE

Release of NSW public hospitals performance report

The Bureau of Health Information today released its first edition of *Hospital Quarterly* with a focus on 400,000 admitted patient episodes, 500,000 emergency department attendances and waiting times across NSW public hospitals from April to June 2010.

Bureau of Health Information Chief Executive, Dr Diane Watson, said *Hospital Quarterly: Performance of NSW Public Hospitals* looked at hospital use, elective surgery and emergency departments.

“It shows how hospitals are performing, how use of hospitals is changing over time and how public hospitals compare with each other,” Dr Watson said.

“The report shows that elective surgery patients from the most urgent groups are more likely to be seen within the clinically recommended time while the least urgent patients are waiting longer than a year ago.”

This edition also has an intensive focus on emergency departments and the Bureau has reported on arrivals by ambulance and how long patients spend at each stage of their journey through 66 NSW emergency departments.

“We found NSW emergency departments are treating more patients in the recommended time than a year ago but 68 per cent of ambulance patients, rather than the target 90 per cent, are being transferred into the care of an emergency department within 30 minutes of arrival,” Dr Watson said.

The report includes information from the 2009 NSW Health Patient Survey, the largest patient survey in Australia, on how patients rate emergency department care and how the 66 hospitals compare.

“What mattered most to the 21,000 patients surveyed was courtesy of staff, completeness of care and waiting times,” Dr Watson said.

Surveyed patients described their care as excellent (26%), very good (32%), good (25%), fair (12%) or poor (5%).

“Hospitals performing to the recommended surgical and emergency department waiting times and hospitals with higher or lower patient ratings of care in emergency departments are found across the state,” Dr Watson said.

“The demand on healthcare services and the time it takes to access care in the state’s emergency departments are two of the most important issues facing hospitals today.”

More information about the time spent in emergency departments, elective surgery performance and other findings in the report are in the attached backgrounder. *Hospital Quarterly* and profiles for the 66 emergency departments can be found at www.bhi.nsw.gov.au

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