



Results from the 2018 patient survey **Outpatient Cancer Clinics**

We heard from more than 11,000 people about their experiences at NSW outpatient cancer clinics in 2018

Listening to what patients have to say about their experiences of care at outpatient cancer clinics can help health professionals better understand the needs of people affected by cancer. This can assist health professionals to provide treatment that is more responsive to patients' needs and inform improvements in the quality of care.

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) partnered with the Cancer Institute NSW (CINSW) to deliver the Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey 2018. Survey results reflect the experiences of 11,378 patients who attended one of 44 NSW facilities in November 2018, including three private facilities (Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, Riverina Cancer Care Centre and Sydney Adventist Hospital). Results for 37 of the larger facilities included in the survey are available in the Supplementary Data Tables and on the Bureau of Health Information (BHI's) interactive data portal, Healthcare Observer.

This report highlights key findings in relation to the experiences of patients at outpatient cancer clinics in NSW. While facilities may house a number of individual clinics, results are reported at the facility level.

Outpatient cancer clinics provide important and ongoing care to patients, from initial diagnosis through to treatment and follow-up care. Almost one in five patients (19%) received treatment in these clinics for reasons other than cancer (e.g. lupus, rheumatoid arthritis).

Overall ratings of care: Almost all patients (99%) said overall, the care they received was 'very good' (85%) or 'good' (14%). More than eight in 10 patients (82%) said their care was 'very well organised' (pages 2–3).

Experiences of care: Eight in 10 patients (80%) said health professionals 'definitely' knew enough about their medical history and the same percentage (80%) said they were 'definitely' involved as much as they wanted to be in decisions about their care and treatment (pages 4–5).

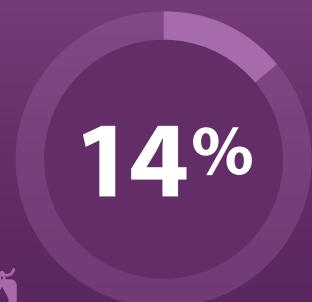
Follow-up and self-management support: Nine in 10 patients (90%) said they were told who to contact if they were worried about their condition or treatment after they left the facility. Fifteen per cent of patients said they experienced a problem or complication during or shortly after their clinic visit (pages 6–7).

Overall, patients rated their care at cancer facilities as

'very good'



'good'



Overall ratings of care

Overall ratings of care reflect general measures of patient satisfaction about the care they received in outpatient cancer clinics.

Almost all patients (99%) said overall, the care they received was 'very good' (85%) or 'good' (14%) (Figure 1a). For patients who said 'very good', results ranged from 70% to 100% across facilities (Figure 2a).

Most patients (86%) rated their health professionals as 'very good', while a further 13% said they were 'good' (Figure 1b). There were no facilities that had significantly higher or lower results for this measure. (Figure 2b).

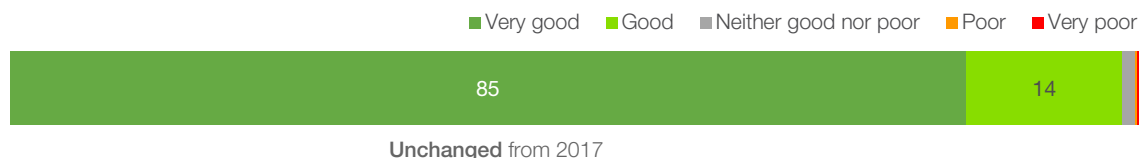
More than eight in 10 patients (82%) said they found their care to be 'very well organised' (Figure 1c). Results ranged from 67% to 97% across facilities (Figure 2c).

Ensuring that all patients have positive experiences of care is a high priority for healthcare providers. There is evidence that some patient groups (for example, men and older people) tend to respond more positively to surveys. This means that facilities with higher proportions of patients with these characteristics tend to have higher patient experience ratings.

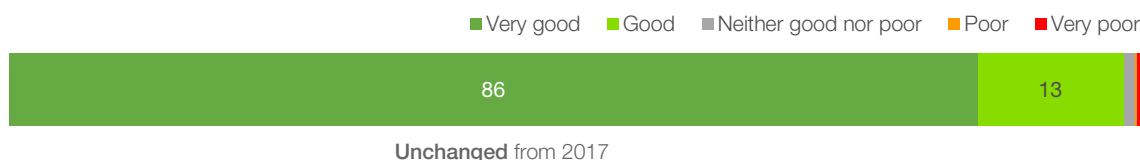
To enable fairer comparisons across facilities, BHI has taken the characteristics of patients in each facility (including age, sex, education level, language and cancer type) into account. Therefore, when a facility is flagged as having a significantly higher or lower result than NSW, this is more likely to reflect differences in patient experiences and less likely to reflect differences in the facility's patient mix. For further details, please see the survey's Technical Supplement at bhi.nsw.gov.au

Figure 1 Percentage of patients in NSW, all response categories, 2018

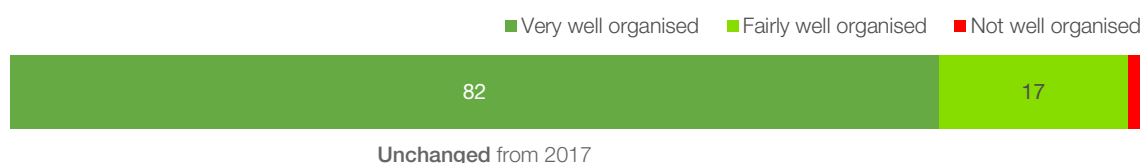
a. Overall, how would you rate the care you received in the clinic?



b. Overall, how would you rate the health professionals who treated you?

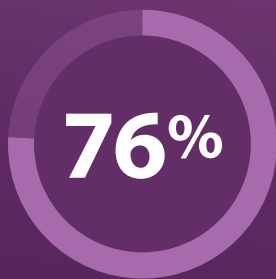


c. How well organised was the care you received in the clinic?

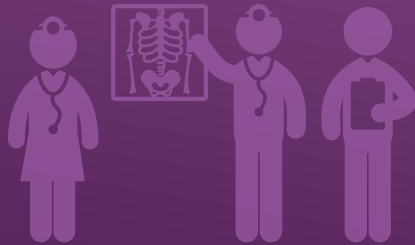


Note: Results may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

When asked how well the health professionals worked together



said 'very good'



What could improve...

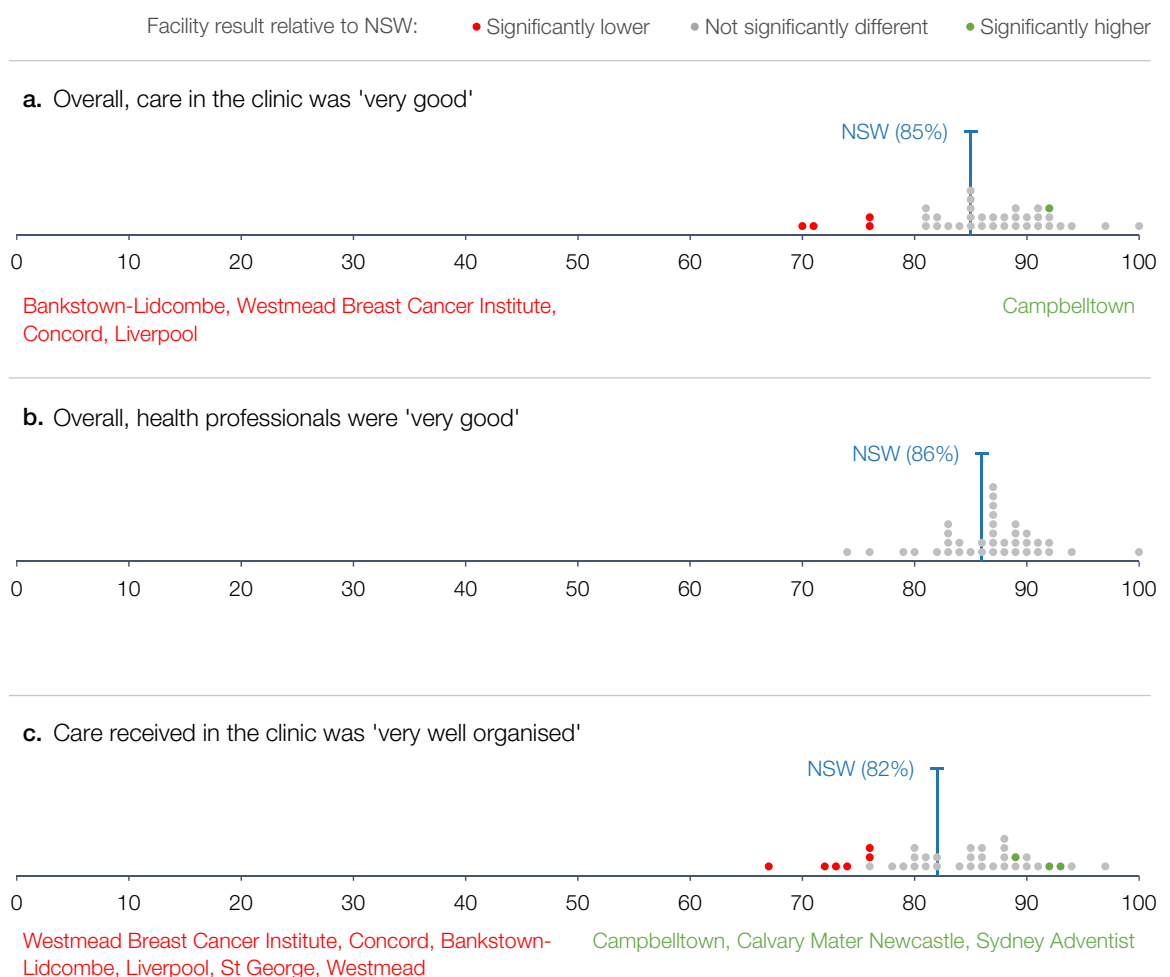
“

Communication between specialists and the doctors, and also between doctors and the nurses and me. I often got contradictory or unclear information.

”

In the figures below, each dot represents an individual facility's result. After accounting for patient characteristics, facilities whose results are significantly different from NSW are listed below the graph in order from lowest to highest. Detailed results for all facilities are available in **Healthcare Observer** and the Supplementary Data Tables at bhi.nsw.gov.au

Figure 2 Percentage of patients in each facility who selected the most positive response category, 2018



Note: A facility is noted as having a result that is significantly higher or significantly lower than the NSW result for a question after differences in patient characteristics (including age, sex, education level, language spoken at home and cancer type) have been taken into account.

Experiences of care

Patients who attended outpatient cancer facilities shared their experiences about a range of aspects of their care, including waiting time, coordination of care and involvement in decisions about their care and treatment.

About eight in 10 patients (81%) said their appointment started within 30 minutes of the scheduled time (Figure 3a). Results ranged from 53% to 97% across facilities (Figure 4a).

Eight in 10 patients (80%) said health professionals 'definitely' knew enough about their medical history (Figure 3b). Across facilities, results ranged from 68% to 89% (Figure 4b).

Almost all patients (95%) wanted to be involved in decisions about their care and treatment. Of those patients, 80% said they were 'definitely' involved

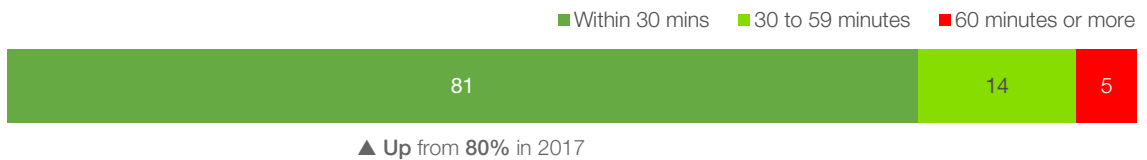
as much as they wanted to be (Figure 3c). Results ranged from 71% to 93% across facilities (Figure 4c).

Measures of patient engagement with health professionals were positive. At least nine in 10 patients said health professionals 'always': explained things in an understandable way (90%); were kind and caring (95%); and treated them with respect and dignity (96%). There were no facilities that had significantly higher or lower results for these measures.

Results are available in **Healthcare Observer** and the Supplementary Data Tables for the 37 facilities where enough responses were received to report results. For responses from the remaining seven facilities, which contribute to the NSW results, visit bhi.nsw.gov.au

Figure 3 Percentage of patients in NSW, all response categories, 2018

a. How long after the scheduled appointment time did your appointment actually start?



b. During this visit, did the health professionals know enough about your medical history?



c. Were you involved, as much as you wanted to be, in decisions about your care and treatment?*



* Based on responses from 95% of patients who said they wanted to be involved in decisions about their care and treatment.
Note: Results may not add up to 100% due to rounding.



At least nine in 10 patients said professionals 'always'

Explained things in an understandable way

90%

Treated them with respect and dignity

96%

Best part of care...

“

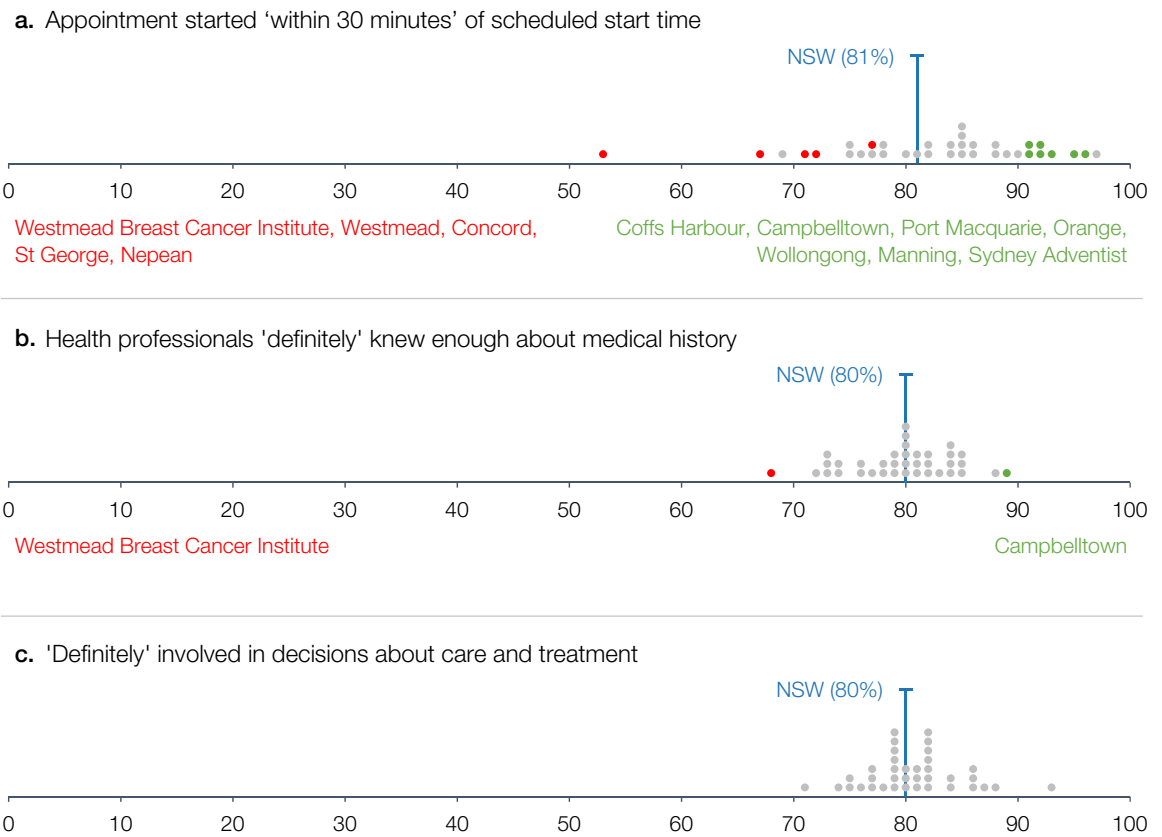
Everyone at the clinic was very kind; they listened to my fears and made allowances for my anxiety.

”

Figure 4

Percentage of patients in each facility who selected the most positive response category, 2018

Facility result relative to NSW: ● Significantly lower ● Not significantly different ● Significantly higher



Note: A facility is noted as having a result that is significantly higher or significantly lower than the NSW result for a question after differences in patient characteristics (including age, sex, education level, language spoken at home and cancer type) have been taken into account.

Follow-up and self-management support

It is important that health professionals enable patients and their families to manage their ongoing health following treatment at an outpatient cancer clinic.

More than eight in 10 patients (83%) said a health professional 'completely' explained the next steps of their care and treatment in a way they could understand (Figure 5a). There were no facilities that had significantly higher or lower results for this measure (Figure 6a).

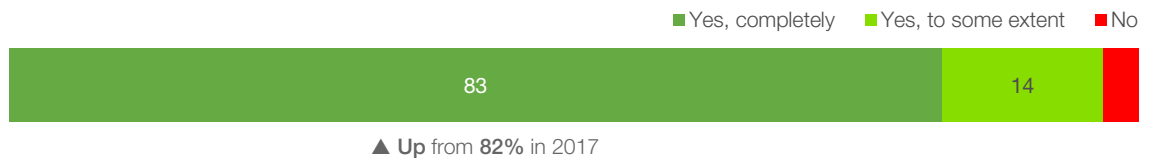
Around three-quarters of patients (76%) thought they needed contact information for the clinic when they left. Of those, nine in 10 patients (90%) said they were told who to contact if they were worried about their condition or treatment after they left the facility (Figure 5b). There were no facilities that had significantly higher or lower results for this measure (Figure 6b).

More than half of patients (54%) thought their family or carer needed information about how to help care for them at home. Of those, almost seven in 10 patients (69%) said their family or carer received enough of this information (Figure 5c). Results ranged from 53% to 82% across facilities (Figure 6c).

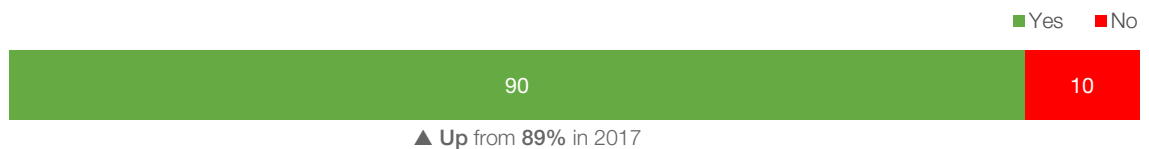
Patients may experience problems during or shortly after attending a clinic. More than one in 10 patients (15%) said they experienced at least one problem or complication related to their treatment. Of the eight issues listed, the most common type of problem or complication reported was 'severe anxiety or worry' (4%). Five per cent of patients said they subsequently attended an emergency department due to complications related to the care they received in the clinic.

Figure 5 Percentage of patients in NSW, all response categories, 2018

a. Did a health professional at the clinic explain the next steps of your care and treatment in a way you could understand?



b. Were you told who to contact if you were worried about your condition or treatment after you left the clinic?*



c. Did a health professional at the clinic give your family or someone close to you enough information to help care for you at home?*



*of the 76% of patients, which excludes those who said they did not need information.

**of 54% of patients, which excludes those who said information for family was not applicable to their situation.

Note: Results may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Patients with a problem or complication said they experienced one or more of the following:

	2017	2018
Any problem or complication	14%	15%
Severe anxiety or worry	4%	4%
An infection	3%	3%
An unexpected negative reaction to medication	3%	3%
Any other complication or problem	3%	4%
Severe pain due to the treatment	2%	3%
Lymphoedema (excessive swelling)	2%	2%
Complications as a result of tests or procedures	1%	2%
Uncontrolled bleeding	0%	1%

...and they rated the seriousness as:

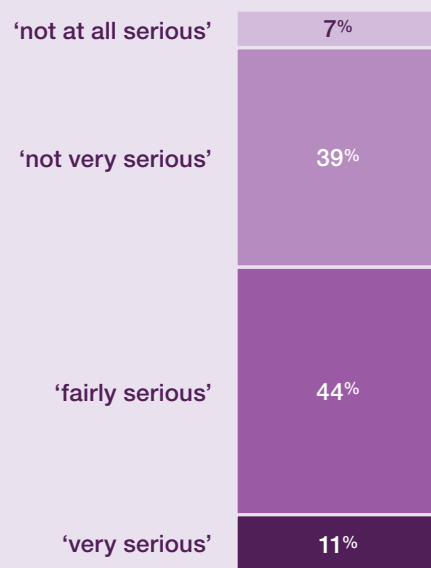
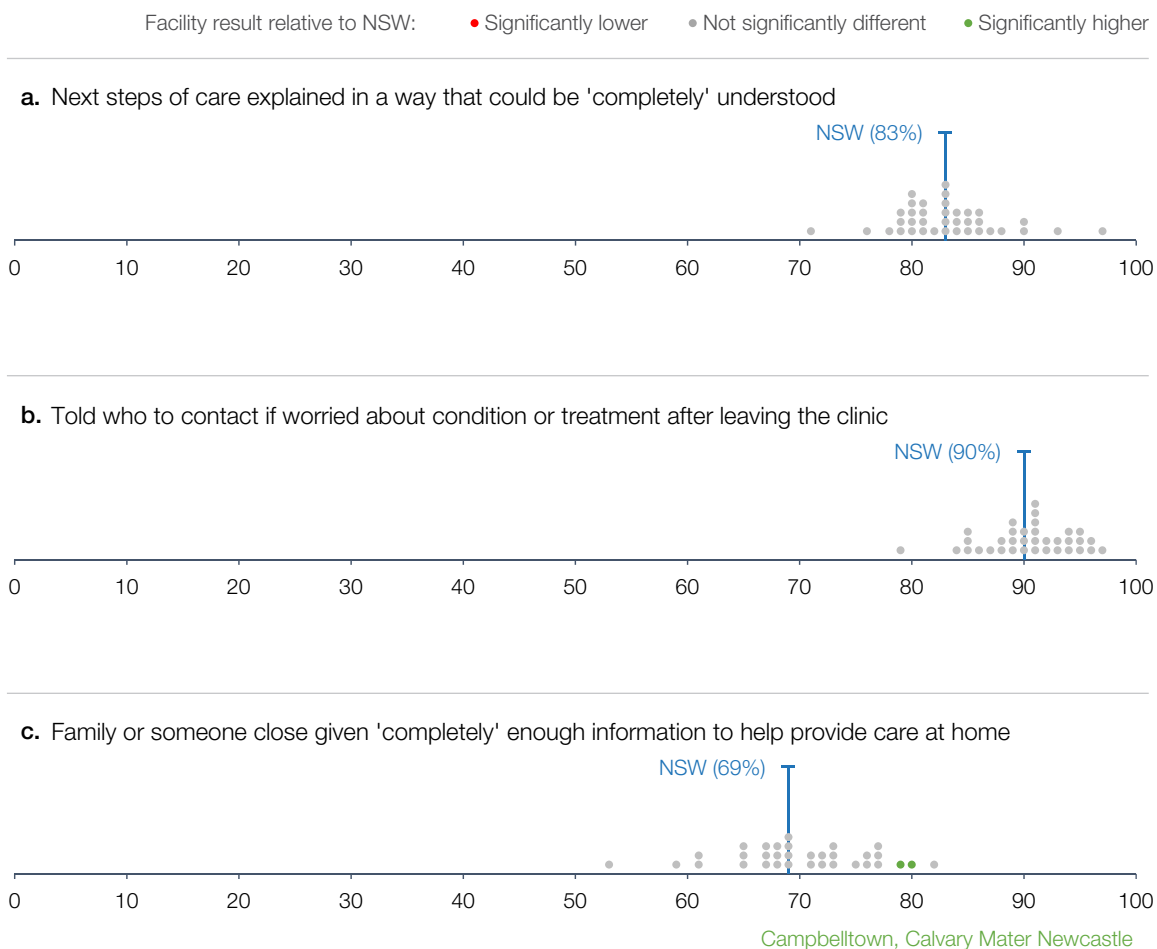


Figure 6 Percentage of patients in each facility who selected the most positive response category, 2018

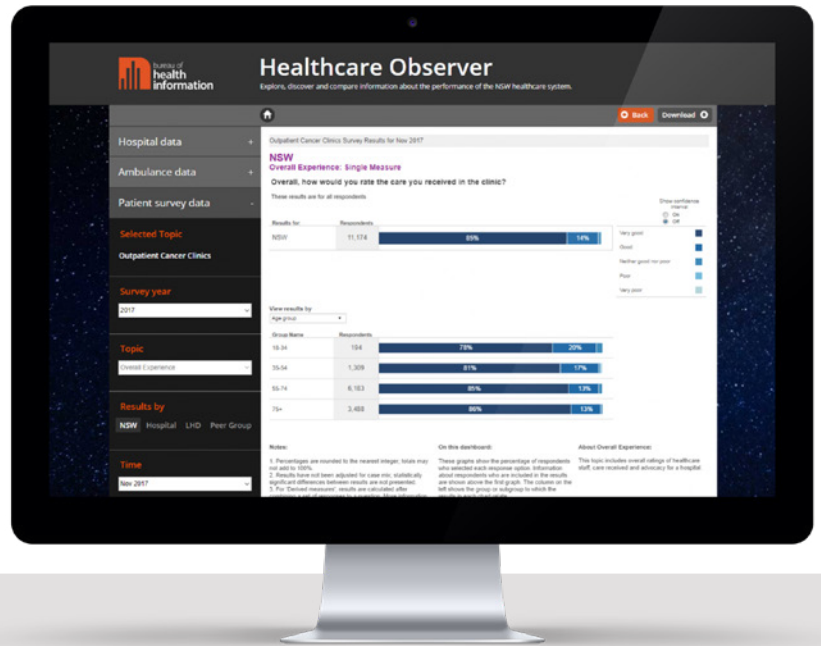


Note: A facility is noted as having a result that is significantly higher or significantly lower than the NSW result for a question after differences in patient characteristics (including age, sex, education level, language spoken at home and cancer type) have been taken into account.

Healthcare Observer

Healthcare Observer is the Bureau of Health Information (BHI's) online interactive data portal which lets you explore and download information about the performance of the NSW healthcare system.

Full results from the Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey 2018 are available at bhi.nsw.gov.au/Healthcare_Observer



Adult Admitted Patient Survey



Emergency Department Patient Survey



Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey



Admitted Children and Young Patients Survey



Maternity Care Survey



Rural Hospital Adult Admitted Patient Survey



Rural Hospital Emergency Care Patient Survey

NSW Patient Survey Program

Each month we ask thousands of people in NSW to tell us about their recent experience with the public healthcare system as part of the NSW Patient Survey Program.

The surveys ask people questions about different aspects of their care such as accessibility and timeliness, the physical environment of the hospital, safety and hygiene, communication and information, and whether they were treated with respect and dignity.

Further information about our surveys can be found at bhi.nsw.gov.au/nsw_patient_survey_program

About the Bureau of Health Information

BHI is a board-governed organisation that publishes independent reports and information about the performance of the healthcare system in NSW.

We aim to provide the community, health professionals and policy makers with information that enhances visibility and understanding of the performance of the healthcare system, in order to inform actions to improve healthcare and strengthen accountability.

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The conclusions in this report are those of BHI and no official endorsement by the NSW Minister for Health, the NSW Ministry of Health or any other NSW public health organisation is intended or should be inferred.



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