



Emergency Department Taskforce

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Emergency Department (ED) Taskforce Newsletter

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Dear colleagues,

The ED Taskforce recently met to review progress on key priorities and share initiatives that are improving access to care for patients across NSW.

Continued Improvements in Access and Patient Flow

Providing timely care remains a priority across the health system, and it is encouraging to note improved performance in Transfer of Care, more patients seen within recommended timeframes for Triage Category 2 and Category 3 patients, and performance has also improved for admissions to Emergency Department Short Stay Units (EDSSU) within four hours.

These improvements reflect the ongoing efforts of clinicians, managers and support staff across NSW who continue to work together to ensure safe care is delivered across all settings.

While reducing Emergency Department length of stay remains an important system focus, members acknowledged the positive progress being achieved through local innovation, strong clinical leadership and sustained collaboration across hospitals and services.

Virtual Hospital Reform

Helping people access the right care, in the right setting, at the right time continues to be at the heart of our work.

The NSW Virtual Hospital Strategy aims to significantly expand access to virtual care services by 2035. As these services continue to develop, more patients will be able to access safe, high-quality care, closer to home, reducing the need for hospital visits where appropriate.

Key initiatives supporting this work include:

- Expansion of Hospital in the Home (HITH)
- Remote patient monitoring programs
- Streamlined referral pathways
- Expanded virtual models of care

These models of care improve access to safe and appropriate healthcare, while supporting health services to manage increasing demand.

Improving Hospital Access Through Better Flow

Lismore Base Hospital's award-winning Better Flow, Better Care program has delivered significant and sustained improvements in Transfer of Care and Hospital Access Target performance.

The initiative has strengthened patient flow through a coordinated, whole-of-hospital approach, reducing delays in care, improving

access to treatment and supporting more timely patient movement across services. These improvements have contributed to reduced pressure on the Emergency Department and improved access to care for patients.

Turning Insight into Action: Start AI Tool

Sydney Triage and Admission Risk Tool (START) and Early Warning Score (EWS) was piloted across several health districts. START AI is helping support early operational decision-making and help ensure patients receive timely and appropriate care throughout their hospital stay.

The Taskforce supported further exploration of artificial intelligence-enabled solutions to assist patient flow management and capacity planning.

Faster Access to Emergency Care

The Taskforce reviewed the evaluation of the Emergency Care Assessment and Treatment (ECAT) model, which continues to deliver positive results across NSW.

The evaluation found that patients are receiving treatment sooner, including faster access to pain relief, while hospitals continue to meet important clinical care standards. With ECAT now used in more than 42 per cent of emergency departments across the state, more patients are benefiting from timely assessment and treatment, helping improve their experience and access to care.

Supporting Safe and Timely Transitions from Hospital

Members discussed initiatives to improve discharge pathways for patients awaiting care, including the draft Safe Transitions: ED Patients Awaiting Care Policy Directive.

This work aims to reduce hospital stays, strengthen care transitions, and support timely access to appropriate community-based care.

Thank You

Thank you to the clinicians, managers and support staff across NSW Health who continue to drive these improvements. Your commitment to innovation, collaboration and patient-centred care is helping deliver better experiences and outcomes for communities across the state.

Kind regards,

Dr Trevor Chan

Co-Chair, ED Taskforce
Clinical Director, Emergency Care Institute

Matthew Daly

Co-Chair, ED Taskforce
Deputy Secretary, System Sustainability and Performance