



Message from the Co-Chairs

Emergency Department Taskforce



Emergency Department (ED) Taskforce Newsletter

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Dear colleagues,

What a year it has been! As the Taskforce wraps up its tenth meeting of the year, we're taking a moment to reflect on our efforts in exploring innovative solutions that divert pressure from our hospitals to address ED wait times and access to care.

Here's a recap of some key Taskforce achievements in 2024:

- **Hospital Access Targets (HATS):** review, endorsement and monitoring of the 7 new performance measures launched on 1 July 2024 to improve access to care and treatment in NSW EDs and the in-patient setting.
- **Emergency Care Assessment and Treatment (ECAT)** : review, endorsement and monitoring of the ECAT program that safely reduces the time a patient waits for treatment through standardise nurse-initiated protocols. Over 150 NSW Health EDs are now using ECAT.
- **\$480.7 million ED Relief package:** implementation support and monitoring of the strategies associated with the ED Relief Package announced as part of the 2024-25 NSW Budget to ease pressure on NSW hospitals.

In addition to these achievements, the Taskforce has reviewed and supported several projects:

- **Alternative referral pathways for NSW Ambulance:** in addition to the Virtual Clinical Care Centre (VCCC), exploring alternative referral pathways to reduce potentially avoidable ED attendances, with a focus on Aged Care, Mental Health and Hospital in the Home.
- **Innovator of the Month:** Highlighting creative solutions and models designed to ease ED pressures and inspire system-wide improvements.

At our recent meeting we had the pleasure of hearing from our Innovator of the Month, Dr Jagdev Singh, who showcased the Virtual ED Short Stay Unit (EDSSU) at Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (SCHN). Supported by virtualKIDS, this initiative addresses the challenges of limited physical capacity for paediatric EDSSU patients at SCHN. Thanks to this innovation, many children can now receive the same level of care typically provided in a hospital, all from the comfort of their own home.

Some of our latest highlights include:

- **ED Short Stay Units (EDSSUs):** The revised EDSSU policy has been drafted in consultation with our colleagues across the health system, it provides comprehensive guidance for the EDSSU model of care.
- **Streamlining access to mental health data:** A new data tool has been developed, offering our clinicians instant access to mental health insights within our EDs. This tool supports improved care and patient flow for individuals presenting with mental health or self-harm-related conditions at NSW Health EDs.

Stay tuned for more updates on our innovations and progress!

Kind Regards,

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