



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health

Minister for Medical Research

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 6 December 2012

NSW MEETS ELECTIVE SURGERY TARGETS FOR FIRST TIME: HOSPITALS PERFORMING WELL WITH INFLUX OF PATIENTS

Health Minister Jillian Skinner today congratulated NSW hospital staff on their work to ensure patients are being treated on time.

Figures from the independent Bureau of Health Information report for July-September 2012 showed this was the first time NSW had met recommended waiting times across all elective surgery categories.

Mrs Skinner said it is promising to see NSW hospitals are meeting their surgery targets.

“This means that more patients are undergoing elective surgery within the timeframes recommended by their doctors,” Mrs Skinner said.

“We’re also funding an increased number of procedures, which is helping hospitals to perform more surgery in a more timely fashion.

The Bureau of Health Information has reported on elective surgery waiting times quarterly since 2010.

“Wollongong and Shellharbour hospitals are strong examples of improving performance, with 11 and 18 per cent improvements respectively for patients requiring urgent elective surgery.”

Mrs Skinner said NSW emergency departments treated almost 565,000 patients from July to September this year and admitted nearly 38,000 more patients in the past year.

“I am very pleased that our emergency departments have been able to cope with an increase in attendances while steadily improving emergency department waiting times,” Mrs Skinner said.

“All triage categories experienced a drop in waiting times from this period last year, from patients with life-threatening conditions through to those in less urgent condition.

“For example, we have seen a 17 per cent increase in patients categorised at triage 2, who are patients suffering from imminently life-threatening conditions such as chest pain or severe burns.

“Despite this significant increase, people are not waiting any longer, which is a testament to the hard work of hospital staff throughout NSW.

"John Hunter Hospital was the best performing hospital among the 13 major teaching hospitals in NSW, with a median wait time for patients with imminently life-threatening injuries at just six minutes.

"At Nepean Hospital, patients with potentially life-threatening conditions are now waiting 23 minutes less than this time last year, with other big improvements at Wagga Wagga, Tweed and Dubbo hospitals."