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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS SOAR IN SUMMER MONTHS

Demand on NSW hospitals continues to rise significantly, with more emergency department presentations than ever before over the 2016 summer months.

The latest Bureau of Health Information (BHI) Hospital Quarterly report found more than 672,000 patients presented to emergency departments (EDs) in the January to March 2016 quarter - 26,900 (or four per cent) more than the same time in 2015 and the highest level ever reported by the BHI.

Despite record demand on EDs, 91 per cent of patients arriving by ambulance had their care transferred from paramedics to ED staff within the 30-minute benchmark - a four per cent improvement on the same quarter last year.

Hospital admissions increased to nearly 459,000 this quarter - 14,100 (or three per cent) more than the same time last year.

Health Minister Jillian Skinner said the state's hospitals continue to perform at a high standard while treating even more patients.

"Nowhere is the incredible work of our doctors, nurses and hospital staff more evident than in NSW emergency departments, where presentations have increased steadily year on year over the last five years," Mrs Skinner said.

"In this last quarter, 75 per cent of ED patients were seen within clinically-recommended timeframes. And 74 per cent of patients left the ED within four hours - a major improvement compared to 60 per cent in 2011, when there were 130,000 fewer presentations."

Forty two out of 80 hospitals reported improvements in the percentage of patients leaving the ED within four hours on the same quarter last year. Of these, six improved by more than five per cent: Blacktown, Gosford, Maitland, Mount Druitt, Queanbeyan and Westmead.

There is room for improvement at Hornsby, Nepean and Prince of Wales hospitals, which reported the greatest decrease in the percentage of patients leaving the ED within four hours.

The BHI report also highlights stability in NSW elective surgery performance, with 97 per cent of patients receiving elective surgical procedures within clinically-recommended timeframes.

Emergency department performance		
	January - March 2011	January - March 2016
Triage category 5: Non-urgent	Median time to start treatment: 31mins	Median time to start treatment: 23 mins
Triage category 4: Semi-urgent	Median time to start treatment: 34 mins	Median time to start treatment: 26 mins
Triage category 3: Urgent	Median time to start treatment: 24 mins	Median time to start treatment: 20 mins
Triage category 2: Emergency	Median time to start treatment: 8 mins	Median time to start treatment: 8 mins
Patients leaving the emergency department in four hours	60 per cent	74 per cent

Elective surgery performance		
	January - March 2011	January - March 2016
All	90 per cent on time	97 per cent on time
Urgent	92 per cent on time	100 per cent on time
Semi-urgent	87 per cent on time	97 per cent on time
Non-urgent	92 per cent on time	96 per cent on time

For further information: Visit the Bureau of Health Information website
http://www.bhi.nsw.gov.au/publications/hospital_quarterly_nsw