



**Jillian Skinner**  
Minister for Health

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Wednesday 16 March 2016

### **EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY AT RECORD LEVELS**

NSW hospitals continue to perform at a high standard despite a record demand on emergency departments, Health Minister Jillian Skinner said today.

The latest Bureau of Health Information (BHI) Hospital Quarterly report found emergency department presentations reached an all-time high of more than 660,000 in the October to December 2015 quarter - 11,900 (or two per cent) more patients than the same time in 2014 and the highest level ever reported by the BHI.

On average, 900 more patients arrived in emergency departments every week, compared to the same period in 2014.

Overall, more than 465,000 people were admitted to NSW hospitals - an increase of one per cent and the highest level ever reported by the BHI.

“The findings show that, at the tail end of one of our busiest ever winter quarters (July to September 2015), hospital presentations remained at high levels due to the lasting impacts of a severe influenza season,” Mrs Skinner said.

“Our hospitals continue to deliver high-quality and timely care, with 74 per cent of patients leaving emergency departments within four hours - a vast improvement from the result of 60 per cent at the end of 2010.

“I congratulate Maitland, Gosford, Blacktown and Broken Hill hospitals in particular for their performance improvements, while noting there is certainly room for improvement at other hospitals, including Campbelltown, Wollongong and Lismore.”

Mrs Skinner credited the work of NSW Health’s Peak Activity Team, which worked closely with Local Health Districts and NSW Ambulance during last year’s winter peak to improve the transfer of patient care from paramedics to hospital staff.

At the end of 2015, 91 per cent of patients arriving by ambulance had their care transferred from paramedics to hospital staff within 30 minutes - a five per cent increase compared to the same time in 2014 and the highest level ever reported.

The BHI data also highlights stability in elective surgery performance. The proportion

of patients who received elective surgery within the clinically-recommended timeframes remained steady at 97 per cent.

<b>Emergency department performance</b>		
	<b>Oct - Dec 2010</b>	<b>Oct - Dec 2015</b>
Triage category 5: Non-urgent	Median time to start treatment: 33 minutes	Median time to start treatment: 24 minutes
Triage category 4: Semi-urgent	Median time to start treatment: 34 minutes	Median time to start treatment: 27 minutes
Triage category 3: Urgent	Median time to start treatment: 23 minutes	Median time to start treatment: 20 minutes
Triage category 2: Emergency	Median time to start treatment: 8 minutes	Median time to start treatment: 8 minutes
Patients leaving the emergency department in four hours	60 per cent	74 per cent

<b>Elective surgery performance</b>		
	<b>Oct - Dec 2010</b>	<b>Oct - Dec 2015</b>
Urgent	93 per cent on time	100 per cent on time
Semi-urgent	90 per cent on time	97 per cent on time
Non-urgent	91 per cent on time	95 per cent on time

**For further information:** Visit the Bureau of Health Information website at: [http://www.bhi.nsw.gov.au/publications/hospital\\_quarterly\\_nsw](http://www.bhi.nsw.gov.au/publications/hospital_quarterly_nsw)