

Question on Notice
No. 1522
Asked on 1 September 2016

MR SPRINGBORG asked the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (HON C R DICK) –

Will the Minister advise many level 2 and level 3 (reported separately) escalations due to congestion at hospital emergency departments were reported by the Queensland Ambulance Service in January, February and March 2016?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Southern Downs for his question.

Recommendation 3 of the Metropolitan Emergency Department Access Initiative (MEDAI) report recommended that Queensland Health review emergency department capacity escalation and establish a mechanism to ensure that it was a mandatory requirement for each Hospital and Health Service (HHS) to be implemented by 1 January 2013.

Escalation processes provide an agreed escalation framework where the QAS works with HHSs during periods of peak activity and elevated demand at emergency departments in an attempt to clear ambulance resources so that the QAS can maximise their response capability to the community.

MEDAI empowered the QAS to request a hospital to initiate specific prescribed actions in response to extended patient off-stretcher times, by requesting an escalation. This enables the QAS to ‘free up’ ambulance vehicles more quickly, providing an improved ambulance response capability.