

Question on Notice

No. 1613

Asked on 30 November 2023

MR J LISTER ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (HON S FENTIMAN)—

QUESTION

With reference to Right to Information Disclosure RTI 2577/21—

Will the Minister provide the number of patients whose Patient Off Stretcher Time was two hours, or greater (reported separately by calendar month) for the 2023 calendar year, per each facility listed in RTI 2577/21?

ANSWER

The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) is the busiest ambulance service in the country, responding to 1.2 million incidents a year. It is also the only mainland service that is free, which will never change under the Miles Government.

Since 2015, we have employed more than 1,300 additional frontline ambulance staff. As a result of our investments, we have been able to ensure that more than 90 per cent of 000 calls are answered within 10 seconds, and 90 per cent of the most critical incidents are attended in approximately 17 minutes.

In addition, the hard work of our paramedics, as well as that of our amazing ED staff, means that the statewide median ED waiting time is 15 minutes.

But we know there is more to do, which is why we are implementing the \$764 million *Putting Patients First* plan.

Putting Patients First makes significant and targeted investments to improve the flow of patients through hospitals. The implementation of this plan is well under way, focusing on five key areas across the entire patient journey, from the moment that someone calls Triple Zero until the day that they return home.

As part of *Putting Patients First*, we are investing in more frontline health workers including specialist ED physicians, investing in more beds to support our growing population, and ensuring better coordination of patient flow through our busiest hospitals.

In addition, we are implementing a range of measures following the Ministerial Patient Flow Meeting held in November last year, to ensure extra support is provided to our busiest hospitals.

These measures include:

- Increasing the availability of nursing care in Emergency Departments with a focus on triage and waiting room nursing support;
- Funding dedicated senior doctors to act as Medical Commanders, managing the flow of patients from ambulances to the emergency department;
- Expanding Rapid Access Services and Surgical Assessment Units to improve patient flows within our EDs;
- Increasing access to imaging through extended hours of operation after hours and on weekends; and,
- Working with General Practices so that they can employ Patient Care Facilitators to keep Queenslanders out of hospital.

I am advised that QAS provides Patient Off-Stretcher Time (POST) data for Queensland Health's approved key performance measure, as detailed in the Service Delivery Statement.

The established standard measure of POST is provided to Queensland Health by QAS and is publicly available from the Queensland Health Hospital Performance Website at www.performance.health.qld.gov.au.

I am advised that October to December 2023 is not part of the most recently published quarterly POST data and is not due for release until early 2024.

Across all Queensland emergency departments, between January and September 2023, 60.3 per cent of patients were transferred off stretcher within 30 minutes, compared to 60.1 per cent in the same period last year.

In addition, in the September Quarter 2023, across all facilities, 60.7 per cent of patients were transferred off stretcher within 30 minutes, improving on the 59.1 per cent reported in the prior quarter.

Due to the privacy risks associated with small numbers of patients and the inclusion of small facilities in this request it is not appropriate to provide the data as requested due to the potential to identify individual patients within the data set.