

Question on Notice

No. 606

Asked on 21 May 2024

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

QUESTION

With reference to answer to Question on Notice No. 983 of 2022—

Will the Minister advise how many patients were in hospital Emergency Departments for more than 24 hours before being discharged or admitted as an inpatient (reported separately by each hospital and each calendar month, in table format) from January 2024 to April 2024?

ANSWER

I'm pleased to advise that across the state, there has been a more than six per cent reduction in the number of patients spending longer than 24 hours in an Emergency Department (ED) than at this time last year.

Any patient presenting to an ED will be assessed and appropriately triaged, depending on their condition.

In the March quarter 2024, 100 per cent of the most serious patients were seen within two minutes of arrival. In addition, across this period Queensland EDs saw over 603,800 patients, and 71.7 per cent of them were seen within clinically recommended timeframes – 0.4 percentage points more than the same time last year.

There are several reasons a patient may stay for 24 hours within the ED, including patients with volatile clinical status requiring repeated adjustments to treatment interventions and clinical decision making around ongoing care needs and most appropriate disposition. Patients may also require access to specialist clinicians or equipment, that would not be immediately available outside of the ED. For example, telemetry, negative pressure, isolation, or mental health.

When patients are being treated in the ED for more than 24 hours, they are monitored by the clinical staff and the management to identify the reason and to take affirmative action where required. I am advised that where patients are receiving treatment in EDs, they are in designated treatment spaces. For example, if a patient is waiting for a medical admission, then an escalation process will occur to help facilitate the movement of the patient.

The Miles Government is committed to ensuring Queenslanders can access worldclass health care no matter where they live, and part of that commitment is improving ED wait times.

That's why we're investing in whole of hospital strategies focused on improving patient flow. As part of the 2024-25 Budget, \$1.14 billion will be invested to further enhance the *Putting Patients First* plan.

The *Putting Patients First* plan 2024-25 builds on the \$764 million invested in 2023-24 through new initiatives that address emerging healthcare challenges, previously announced projects to increase capacity, and direct resources to critical areas within the healthcare system.

These programs make significant and targeted investments to improve the flow of patients through hospitals by:

- increasing the capacity of the Queensland Ambulance Service, with new ambulance stations, new ambulance vehicles and more paramedics;
- operating Urgent Care Clinics, Rapid Access Services, Satellite Hospitals and Mental Health Co-Responder models that provide safe and appropriate care to patients in alternative settings and reduce emergency department presentations;
- increasing the front-line workforce, including Mental Health clinicians, Emergency Department Medical and Flow Commanders, Waiting Room Nurses, Access Nurses and Transfer Initiative Nurses who provide faster access to care in the emergency department;
- improving access to more beds including hospital expansions, transit lounge and short stay unit expansions, as well as Allied Health led discharge support and extended hours, all of which will provide additional physical hospital capacity to meet the demand for inpatient care;
- improving access to more appropriate beds for aged care and NDIS patients; and
- expanding Rapid Access Services, Surgical Assessment Units and hours of operation for medical imaging to further improve patient flows within emergency department.

We have expanded on last year's investments because thanks to them, and thanks to the hard work of our frontline staff, we are seeing improvements in system performance.

The data below reflects the total number of patients whose ED length of stay was greater than 24 hours before being admitted or discharged for each month within the March 2024 quarter (January, February and March) for each of Queensland Health's 26 largest EDs.

- Bundaberg Base Hospital - 58, 88 and 96 respectively, of a total 12,196 presentations
- Caboolture Hospital - 44, 41 and 16 respectively, of a total 16,004 presentations
- Cairns Hospital - 6, 19 and 13 respectively, of a total 22,750 presentations
- Gladstone Hospital - 40, 65 and 79 respectively, of a total 10,004 presentations
- Gold Coast University Hospital - 131, 120 and 131 respectively, of a total 32,307 presentations
- Gympie Hospital - 22, 17 and 8 respectively, of a total 9,344 presentations

- Hervey Bay Hospital - 366, 260 and 261 respectively, of a total 11,763 presentations
- Ipswich Hospital - 22, 43 and 29 respectively, of a total 20,119 presentations
- Logan Hospital - 111, 158 and 158 respectively, of a total 27,790 presentations
- Mackay Base Hospital - 234, 195 and 136 respectively, of a total 13,918 presentations
- Maryborough Hospital - 19, 20 and 14 respectively, of a total 7,002 presentations
- Mater Hospital Brisbane - 47, 73 and 17 respectively, of a total 13,951 presentations
- Mount Isa Hospital - 19, 35 and 24 respectively, of a total 8,936 presentations
- Nambour General Hospital - 2, 5 and 4 respectively, of a total 10,062 presentations
- Princess Alexandra Hospital - 19, 32 and 38 respectively, of a total 17,475 presentations
- Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital - 10, 19 and 2 respectively, of a total 16,660 presentations
- Queensland Children's Hospital - 1, 1 and 3 respectively, of a total 19,553 presentations
- Redcliffe Hospital - 4, 6 and 6 respectively, of a total 19,142 presentations
- Redland Hospital - 99, 78 and 32 respectively, of a total 14,873 presentations
- Robina Hospital - 11, 13 and 15 respectively, of a total 16,794 presentations
- Rockhampton Hospital - 263, 255 and 248 respectively, of a total 13,375 presentations
- Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital - 1, 9 and 19 respectively, of a total 22,945 presentations
- Sunshine Coast University Hospital - 1, 4 and 0 respectively, of a total 25,499 presentations
- The Prince Charles Hospital - 0, 0 and 0 respectively, of a total 28,978 presentations
- Toowoomba Hospital - 70, 43 and 81 respectively, of a total 16,593 presentations
- Townsville University Hospital - 33, 40 and 15 respectively, of a total 25,150 presentations

April data will become available in line with June Quarter 2024 Queensland Hospital Performance website publication.