National Health Performance Authority

UPDATE
Hospital Performance

Published May 2014

Time patients spent in emergency departments in 2012 and 2013

Information in this report was updated in November 2016, see www.myhospitals.gov.au

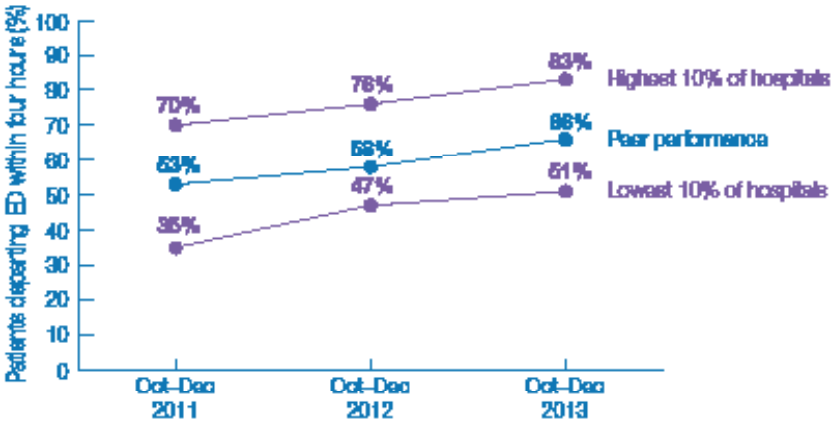
This report presents the percentage of patients leaving emergency departments within four hours of arrival across 112 public hospitals.

In 2013, there were almost 7 million patient presentations to emergency departments (EDs) around Australia. At major metropolitan hospitals, which accounted for 44% of patient presentations across all hospitals in 2013, average performance for this peer group (peer performance) has increased steadily. In October–December 2011, 53% of patients who presented at these hospital EDs departed within four hours; this increased to 66% in October–December 2013 **(Figure 1)**.

Improvements are particularly evident among the lowest-performing major metropolitan hospitals. Among these hospitals, 35% of patients departed ED within four hours in October–December 2011, which increased to 51% in October–December 2013. The highest-performing hospitals have also improved since 2011. At major regional hospitals, which accounted for 16% of patient presentations in 2013, peer performance has been relatively consistent in recent years.

In the most recent reporting quarter (October–December 2013), peer performance was similar at major metropolitan (66%) and major regional hospitals (70%). There was also marked variation in the percentage of patients departing ED at hospital level within each of these peer groups **(Figures 3 and 4)**.

Figure 1: Performance trends for *major metropolitan hospitals*, Oct–Dec 2011 to Oct–Dec 2013



Report highlights

- The latest available information on the time patients spent in ED at 112 of Australia's major and large hospitals
- Quarterly data are presented at hospital level for 52 major metropolitan and 27 major regional hospitals across five quarters **(Figures 3 and 4)**
- Data include the addition of three new quarters: April–June 2013, July–September 2013, and October–December 2013
- Annual data are presented at hospital level for 79 major and 33 large hospitals by state and territory in 2012 and 2013 **(Tables 2 to 9)**.

MyHospitals

For further information on the time patients spent in ED at 112 major and large hospitals and data for an additional 174 hospitals, including specialist and children's hospitals, visit **www.myhospitals.gov.au**

Background and measure overview

This report highlights the extent to which patients depart public hospital EDs within four hours of arrival. This is measured as the percentage of patients who, after attending an ED, are subsequently admitted to the hospital, referred to another hospital or discharged within four hours. This is not a measure of waiting times for treatment, which refers to the period of time from arrival at hospital to the start of treatment **(Figure 2)**.

This update includes data from 112 of Australia's major and large public hospitals, representing 76% of the 7 million patient presentations across Australia in 2013. These hospitals were placed in one of four peer groups based on their size and geographical location: major metropolitan, major regional, large metropolitan and large regional.

The information in this report is intended to help health care professionals compare their hospital against similar hospitals in the context of national standards and support the sharing of effective practices to manage the time patients spend in ED.

The National Emergency Access Target

The National Emergency Access Target (NEAT) was agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2011. Regular reporting against NEAT highlights the performance of public hospitals and their EDs.

The states and territories have varying annual targets for the percentage of patients to leave an ED within four hours of arrival. In 2013, the target ranges from 65% in the Australian Capital Territory to 81% in Western Australia. By the end of 2015, 90% of patients across hospital EDs nationally should depart within four hours of arrival **(Table 1)**.

The target was not set at 100% as, in some circumstances, it is clinically appropriate for patients to stay in ED beyond four hours.

Figure 2: Measurement of time patients spend in emergency departments

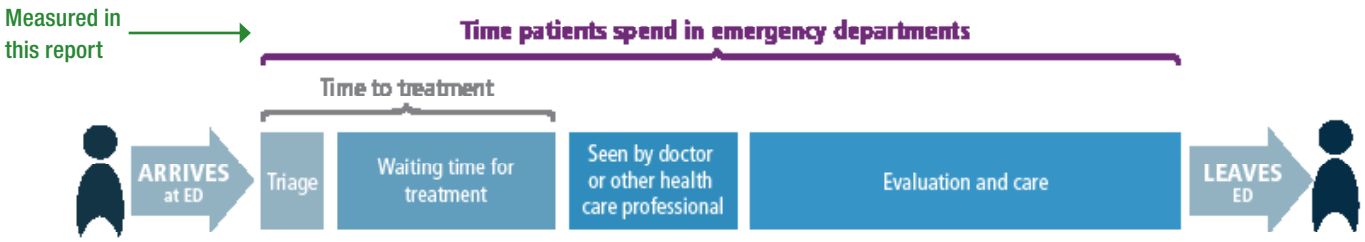


Table 1: State and territory National Emergency Access Targets* for the percentage of all patients departing ED within four hours of arrival, 2012–2015

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT
Jan–Dec 2012	69%	70%	70%	67%	76%	72%	69%	64%
Jan–Dec 2013	71%	75%	77%	75%	81%	78%	75%	65%
Jan–Dec 2014	81%	81%	83%	82%	85%	84%	83%	77%
Jan–Dec 2015	**90%**	**90%**	**90%**	**90%**	**90%**	**90%**	**90%**	**90%**

* Figures reflect the most current agreed state and territory targets – Australian Government Department of Health correspondence to National Health Performance Authority, 11 February 2014. These targets are set at the state and territory level; they are not hospital-level targets.

Source: National Health Reform Agreement – National Partnership Agreement on Improving Public Hospital Services, 2011.

Figure 3: Percentage of *all patients* departing ED within four hours of arrival at *major metropolitan hospitals*, Oct–Dec 2012 to Oct–Dec 2013

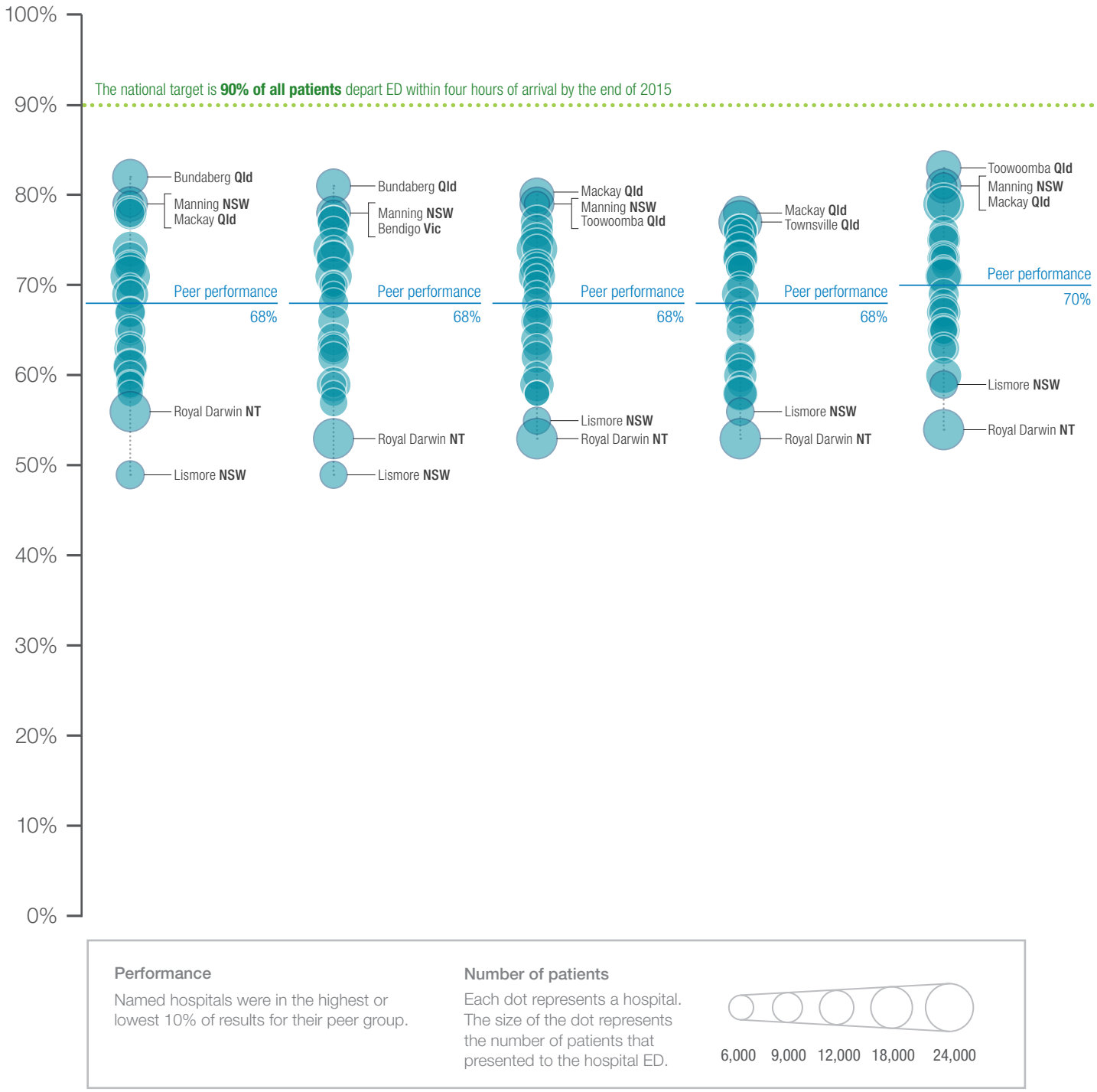
	Oct–Dec 2012	Jan–Mar 2013	Apr–Jun 2013	Jul–Sep 2013	Oct–Dec 2013
Patient presentations	763,596	757,073	752,531	781,801	796,421
Percentage of presentations across all EDs	45%	45%	45%	44%	44%

Note: For information on measures, suppression and peer groups, see **www.myhospitals.gov.au**

Sources: National Health Performance Authority analysis of National Non-admitted Patient Emergency Department Care Database 2012–13, data extracted 4 March 2014 and National Emergency Access Target Quarterly Data Collection 2013, data extracted 4 March 2014.

Figure 4: Percentage of *all patients* departing ED within four hours of arrival at *major regional hospitals*, Oct–Dec 2012 to Oct–Dec 2013

	Oct–Dec 2012	Jan–Mar 2013	Apr–Jun 2013	Jul–Sep 2013	Oct–Dec 2013
Patient presentations	282,732	277,565	276,659	286,015	287,866
Percentage of presentations across all EDs	17%	17%	17%	16%	16%



Note: For information on measures, suppression and peer groups, see **www.myhospitals.gov.au**

Sources: National Health Performance Authority analysis of National Non-admitted Patient Emergency Department Care Database 2012–13, data extracted 4 March 2014 and National Emergency Access Target Quarterly Data Collection 2013, data extracted 4 March 2014.

New South Wales

The annual state target was 69% in 2012 and 71% in 2013

Table 2: Time patients spent in emergency departments in *New South Wales*, by *peer group*, Jan–Dec 2012 and Jan–Dec 2013

		Jan–Dec 2012		Jan–Dec 2013		
Peer group	Hospital	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	% point change*
Major metropolitan	The Tweed	41,331	65%	43,651	75% ◎	+10
	Concord	35,658	62%	36,644	68%	+6
	Hornsby	33,070	52%	35,756	67%	+15
	St George	66,483	54%	67,670	65%	+10
	Prince of Wales	47,837	56%	53,127	64%	+8
	Sutherland	47,720	54%	48,542	63%	+9
	Royal North Shore	62,994	51%	69,610	63%	+11
	Nepean	57,290	47%	61,189	61%	+14
	St Vincent's	43,595	53%	45,840	60%	+8
	Wyong	58,293	57%	58,921	60%	+2
	Campbelltown	57,837	48%	58,775	59%	+11
	Wollongong	55,608	46%	58,645	58%	+12
	Royal Prince Alfred	69,817	49%	71,541	57%	+8
	Bankstown	46,438	46%	47,452	55%	+9
	John Hunter	70,217	48%	70,181	54%	+6
	Liverpool	68,111	40%	73,075	54%	+14
	Westmead	59,806	42%	63,628	53%	+11
	Blacktown	36,950	37%	37,960	51%	+14
	Gosford	57,729	45%	57,847	48%	+3
Major regional	Manning	25,531	64%	26,077	78% ◎	+14
	Orange	27,699	65%	27,010	70%	+5
	Coffs Harbour	34,649	58%	35,426	69%	+12
	Tamworth	39,957	62%	41,279	68%	+6
	Shoalhaven	36,139	60%	36,489	66%	+6
	Port Macquarie	31,633	61%	28,737	61%	+1
	Wagga Wagga	35,272	57%	35,104	61%	+4
	Dubbo	28,385	59%	27,705	60%	0
	Lismore	29,870	49%	29,266	55%	+5
Large metropolitan	Manly	24,166	75% ◎	24,661	84% ◎	+9
	Auburn	25,327	67%	25,988	80% ◎	+13
	Fairfield	33,497	65%	34,206	76% ◎	+11
	Mona Vale	30,725	67%	32,515	73% ◎	+6
	Ryde	25,613	66%	26,333	73% ◎	+7
	Hawkesbury [Public]	21,205	55%	21,517	70%	+15
	Canterbury	36,653	55%	38,352	68%	+13
	Calvary Mater [Newcastle]	32,979	67%	33,212	68%	+1
	Maitland	45,165	65%	44,718	66%	+2
	Shellharbour	26,883	54%	27,298	60%	+6
Large regional	Bathurst	23,899	70% ◎	23,821	72% ◎	+2
	Grafton	22,044	62%	22,593	68%	+6

* Due to separate rounding of data values, the total percentage point change may not match the published individual annual totals.

Note: National Emergency Access Targets are set at the state and territory level; they are not hospital-level targets. For information on measures, suppression and peer groups, see **www.myhospitals.gov.au**

Sources: National Health Performance Authority analysis of National Non-admitted Patient Emergency Department Care Database 2011–12 and 2012–13; 2011–12 data extracted 23 April 2013 and 2012–13 data extracted 4 March 2014, and National Emergency Access Target Quarterly Data Collection 2013, data extracted 4 March 2014.

◎ Met the annual state/territory target based on data from the reported time period

In the highest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

In the lowest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

Victoria

The annual state target was 70% in 2012 and 75% in 2013

Table 3: Time patients spent in emergency departments in *Victoria*, by *peer group*, Jan–Dec 2012 and Jan–Dec 2013

		Jan–Dec 2012		Jan–Dec 2013		
Peer group	Hospital	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	% point change*
Major metropolitan	The Alfred	57,626	69%	59,546	77% ◎	+8
	Casey	49,441	68%	50,971	73%	+5
	Dandenong	58,150	54%	59,690	69%	+15
	Monash [Clayton]	71,343	61%	74,158	65%	+4
	Maroondah	53,828	62%	54,367	62%	0
	Sunshine	64,685	55%	68,506	61%	+6
	Austin	69,999	56%	73,240	58%	+2
	St Vincent's	41,250	56%	41,586	57%	+1
	Geelong	61,450	57%	63,470	57%	-1
	The Northern	68,367	54%	69,246	56%	+3
	Royal Melbourne	60,921	54%	61,652	55%	+1
	Box Hill	47,386	52%	48,241	54%	+3
	Frankston	57,133	49%	59,694	50%	+1
	Western	35,690	44%	36,688	49%	+6
Major regional	Bendigo	46,529	74% ◎	47,408	76% ◎	+1
	Ballarat	52,935	73% ◎	52,866	72%	-1
	South West [Warrnambool]	25,056	68%	24,541	70%	+2
	Latrobe Regional [Traralgon]	31,294	63%	31,085	69%	+7
	Goulburn Valley [Shepparton]	32,789	66%	33,625	69%	+2
Large metropolitan	Victorian Eye & Ear	40,988	78% ◎	40,282	82% ◎	+5
	Sandringham	33,550	75% ◎	33,513	77% ◎	+2
	Werribee Mercy Public	34,687	67%	34,452	69%	+2
	Angliss	41,257	68%	39,787	68%	0
Large regional	Wodonga	28,770	82% ◎	26,770	77% ◎	-5
	Mildura	27,596	70% ◎	28,894	76% ◎	+6
	West Gippsland [Warragul]	20,008	73% ◎	20,239	70%	-2
	Albury	32,581	70% ◎	32,497	69%	-2
	Northeast Health [Wangaratta]	21,043	72% ◎	20,834	68%	-4

* Due to separate rounding of data values, the total percentage point change may not match the published individual annual totals.

Note: National Emergency Access Targets are set at the state and territory level; they are not hospital-level targets. For information on measures, suppression and peer groups, see **www.myhospitals.gov.au**

Sources: National Health Performance Authority analysis of National Non-admitted Patient Emergency Department Care Database 2011–12 and 2012–13; 2011–12 data extracted 23 April 2013 and 2012–13 data extracted 4 March 2014, and National Emergency Access Target Quarterly Data Collection 2013, data extracted 4 March 2014.

◎ Met the annual state/territory target based on data from the reported time period

In the highest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

In the lowest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

Queensland

The annual state target was 70% in 2012 and 77% in 2013

Table 4: Time patients spent in emergency departments in *Queensland*, by *peer group*, Jan–Dec 2012 and Jan–Dec 2013

		Jan–Dec 2012		Jan–Dec 2013		
Peer group	Hospital	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	% point change*
Major metropolitan	Mater Adult	36,759	68%	37,936	82% ◎	+14
	Ipswich	49,410	67%	52,270	80% ◎	+12
	Prince Charles	52,734	62%	66,080	75%	+12
	Royal Brisbane & Women's	71,257	57%	72,666	74%	+17
	Logan	69,346	58%	74,766	70%	+12
	Gold Coast	94,904	60%	74,481	68%	+8
	Redcliffe	56,847	57%	57,344	67%	+10
	Princess Alexandra	56,883	45%	59,600	65%	+19
	Caboolture	48,421	58%	49,040	64%	+6
Major regional	Mackay	48,101	77% ◎	45,978	79% ◎	+2
	Toowoomba	44,716	67%	46,519	79% ◎	+11
	Bundaberg	48,519	82% ◎	47,980	78% ◎	-4
	Townsville	69,406	66%	74,194	76%	+10
	Rockhampton	47,978	71% ◎	48,882	74%	+3
	Hervey Bay	38,170	71% ◎	37,346	72%	+1
	Cairns	56,633	61%	59,801	71%	+9
	Nambour	44,649	53%	47,056	63%	+11
Large metropolitan	Queen Elizabeth II	37,251	68%	39,179	82% ◎	+13
	Redland	50,915	71% ◎	54,499	78% ◎	+7
Large regional	Mount Isa	33,959	88% ◎	33,086	89% ◎	+1

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◎ Met the annual state/territory target based on data from the reported time period

In the highest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

In the lowest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

South Australia

The annual state target was 67% in 2012 and 75% in 2013

Table 5: Time patients spent in emergency departments in *South Australia*, by *peer group*, Jan–Dec 2012 and Jan–Dec 2013

		Jan–Dec 2012		Jan–Dec 2013		
Peer group	Hospital	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	% point change*
Major metropolitan	Queen Elizabeth	42,919	62%	44,348	61%	0
	Lyell McEwin	61,838	50%	66,742	53%	+3
	Royal Adelaide	71,677	51%	72,052	51%	0
	Flinders	68,024	51%	72,324	50%	-1
Large metropolitan	Modbury	35,995	68% ◎	35,029	56%	-11

Western Australia

The annual state target was 76% in 2012 and 81% in 2013

Table 6: Time patients spent in emergency departments in *Western Australia*, by *peer group*, Jan–Dec 2012 and Jan–Dec 2013

		Jan–Dec 2012		Jan–Dec 2013		
Peer group	Hospital	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	% point change*
Major metropolitan	Royal Perth	76,648	73%	76,853	72%	-1
	Fremantle	57,589	71%	56,651	69%	-1
	Sir Charles Gairdner	63,507	63%	64,537	66%	+3
	Joondalup [Public]	88,812	66%	87,147	65%	-1
Major regional	South West [Bunbury]	35,365	79% ◎	36,812	74%	-5
Large metropolitan	Rockingham	50,289	83% ◎	50,334	82% ◎	-1
	Swan District	44,790	79% ◎	43,102	79%	0
	Armadale-Kelmscott	61,691	78% ◎	61,247	74%	-4
Large regional	Albany	25,416	91% ◎	24,989	88% ◎	-3
	Kalgoorlie	28,549	86% ◎	30,588	88% ◎	+2
	Geraldton	30,047	84% ◎	27,292	80%	-5
	Peel [Public]	43,445	81% ◎	42,681	79%	-2

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Note: National Emergency Access Targets are set at the state and territory level; they are not hospital-level targets. For information on measures, suppression and peer groups, see **www.myhospitals.gov.au**

Sources: National Health Performance Authority analysis of National Non-admitted Patient Emergency Department Care Database 2011–12 and 2012–13; 2011–12 data extracted 23 April 2013 and 2012–13 data extracted 4 March 2014, and National Emergency Access Target Quarterly Data Collection 2013, data extracted 4 March 2014.

◎ Met the annual state/territory target based on data from the reported time period

In the highest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

In the lowest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

Tasmania

The annual state target was 72% in 2012 and 78% in 2013

Table 7: Time patients spent in emergency departments in *Tasmania*, by *peer group*, Jan–Dec 2012 and Jan–Dec 2013

		Jan–Dec 2012		Jan–Dec 2013		
Peer group	Hospital	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	% point change*
Major regional	Launceston	43,175	62%	44,693	64%	+2
	Royal Hobart	49,995	59%	52,469	59%	+1
Large regional	North West Regional [Burnie]	23,928	81% ◎	23,435	77%	-3

Northern Territory

The annual territory target was 69% in 2012 and 75% in 2013

Table 8: Time patients spent in emergency departments in *Northern Territory*, by *peer group*, Jan–Dec 2012 and Jan–Dec 2013

		Jan–Dec 2012		Jan–Dec 2013		
Peer group	Hospital	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	% point change*
Major regional	Alice Springs	41,080	64%	43,279	62%	-2
	Royal Darwin	65,119	53%	66,478	53%	0

Australian Capital Territory

The annual territory target was 64% in 2012 and 65% in 2013

Table 9: Time patients spent in emergency departments in *Australian Capital Territory*, by *peer group*, Jan–Dec 2012 and Jan–Dec 2013

		Jan–Dec 2012		Jan–Dec 2013		
Peer group	Hospital	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	Number of patients	Patients departing within 4hrs of arrival	% point change*
Major metropolitan	Calvary Public	53,592	63%	53,847	66% ◎	+4
	Canberra	66,069	52%	68,033	54%	+2

* Due to separate rounding of data values, the total percentage point change may not match the published individual annual totals.

Note: National Emergency Access Targets are set at the state and territory level; they are not hospital-level targets. For information on measures, suppression and peer groups, see **www.myhospitals.gov.au**

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◎ Met the annual state/territory target based on data from the reported time period

In the highest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

In the lowest 10% of hospitals in the peer group nationally

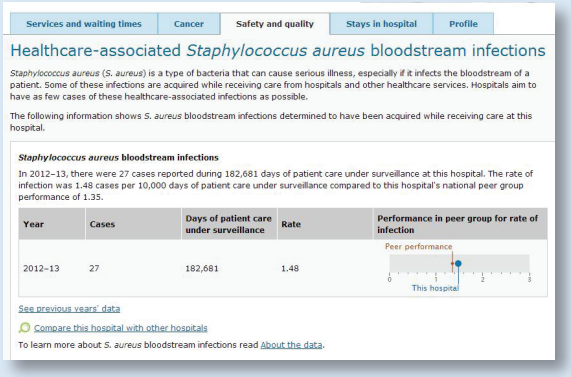
MyHospitals

Visit **www.myhospitals.gov.au** to see how your hospital is performing. Search by geographic location or by hospital name to see hospital profiles and comparable performance results.

On this interactive website you can view the latest performance information for more than 1,000 public and private hospitals throughout Australia.

See performance information for measures such as:

- Surgery waiting times
- Hand hygiene and infection rates
- Length of stay in public hospitals
- Healthcare-associated bloodstream infections.



This website not only enables the public to make informed decisions, it empowers clinicians and service providers to drive improvements in health care services.

Visit MyHospitals for the latest information on your local hospital

Data has been updated for the following measures:

- Time spent in ED for the 112 hospitals covered in this report and an additional 174 public hospitals
- Waiting times in ED (time to treatment) in 286 public hospitals
- Elective surgery waiting times in 245 public hospitals including waiting times for specific procedures such as knee replacement, hip replacement and heart surgery.

What is the National Health Performance Authority?

We are an independent government agency that provides information on health care organisations at a local level across Australia. We produce regular reports and publish data online.

The Performance Authority's activities are guided by a document called the Performance and Accountability Framework agreed by the Council of Australian Governments. The framework contains 48 indicators that form the basis for the Performance Authority's reports.

For more information, go to **www.nhpa.gov.au**

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Please note that there is the potential for minor revisions of this document.