

MEDIA RELEASE

22 October 2014

Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service performance continues to improve

The quarterly check-up of the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service has confirmed its performance in seeing more patients sooner continues to improve.

Data released today shows since local Health Boards and management was put in place two years ago a deliberate focus on timely patient care has paid off.

Health Board Chair Mr Mike Horan commended staff for their efforts to reduce elective surgery, emergency department and dental waiting times.

“The figures speak for themselves in a number of important areas that directly impact on patient care,” Mr Horan said.

“The local Hospital and Health Board has had a strong focus on working towards making sure all patients receive elective surgery when they need it.

“In the March quarter in 2012 there were 319 patients waiting for elective surgery – that is now just two.

“I am pleased to report we are on track to have no patients waiting longer than necessary by the end of this year.

“An average of 457 surgeries are now performed each month at Toowoomba Hospital, up from around 360 per month last year.

“Since June this year we have gone from 38 to two patients on the long-wait list, which is a commendable improvement thanks to the hard work of our staff.”

Mr Horan said 80 per cent of patients were admitted, discharged or transferred within four hours from our emergency departments, an improvement of 15 per cent from March 2012.

“We are also very proud of the work that’s been done to reduce the waiting list for a general dental check-up – down from 7,222 in March 2012 to zero. That means no patients are waiting longer than clinically recommended for a routine oral health examination.

“We are also performing more breast screens with almost 400 more performed in the September quarter than in the same period in 2012,” he said.

Mr Horan said a high priority for the Board was for patients to receive appropriate care within clinically recommended timeframes.

“Some good work has already been done to reduce the number of people waiting for a specialist outpatient appointment from 11,664 mid last year to 6485 this month.

“Of these approximately 3000 are within the clinically recommended timeframe.

“Reducing the waiting list further will continue to be a focus in 2014-2015.”

The Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service (DDHHS) covers approximately 90,000 square kilometres, around 1.5 times the size of Tasmania. The HHS delivers care from 20 hospitals and six residential care facilities, and manages an annual budget of \$607.4 million.

Ends

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