

MEDIA RELEASE

10 November, 2014

Toowoomba Hospital Emergency Department continues to improve

Toowoomba Hospital's Emergency Department (ED) has hit new highs in terms of performance under the National Emergency Access Target (NEAT).

NEAT guidelines recommend patients should be admitted, discharged or transferred within four hours of presentation at an ED.

Recently released quarterly performance figures showed Toowoomba Hospital's ED achieving this goal in 80 per cent of cases by the end of September 2014.

Today Toowoomba Hospital General Manager Dr Peter Gillies said this trend of improvement had pushed the figure to above 84 per cent.

"Our NEAT performance for October came in at 84.4 per cent, which exceeded our target of 83 per cent," Dr Gillies said.

"I think this has been due to a concerted effort from staff across the hospital, particularly ED staff who have worked very hard to continually improve the way we process patients through the department.

"An emergency department functioning well relies on the whole hospital supporting it and certainly there has been very good support, particularly from the general physicians, regarding admitting and discharging patients in a timely and effective manner.

"We also work closely with patients' families to ensure we get people home quickly, however we're continuing to monitor a number of parameters to ensure this doesn't have an adverse impact on patient safety.

"Also very pleasing is the fact that our re-admission rate has actually reduced in the past six months, which would indicate that patients are not being discharged too quickly."

Dr Gillies said the trialling of a new role in the ED had also paid dividends in terms of increased efficiency.

"The role of 'nurse navigator' is to work with the clinicians in ED and the bed manager to ensure that investigations and treatment plans are coordinated effectively," Dr Gillies said.

"The system has worked well and means that in the majority of cases the patient is either discharged home with the treatment and care they need, or admitted into the ward in a timely manner.

"If we look back to 2012, NEAT figures were at 65 per cent, so it's very pleasing to see the way they've continued to improve since then."

Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service provides public hospital and health services to 26 locations across the local government areas of Toowoomba Regional Council, Western Downs Regional Council, Southern Downs Regional Council, South Burnett Regional Council, Goondiwindi Regional Council, Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and part of the Banana Shire Council (community of Taroom). It is managed by a local Hospital and Health Board.

Ends

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Subject	NEAT performance passes 84 per cent		
Due date (expiry date for release)			
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