



Message from the Co-Chairs

Emergency Department Taskforce



Emergency Department (ED) Taskforce Newsletter

Issue 5: July 2024

Dear colleagues,

Winter has arrived! The frosty mornings and prolonged stretches of cold weather are here. We are now seeing an increase in the number of people who present to our EDs with influenza-like illness, and some increase in admissions from EDs. It is now more important than ever to move forward with initiatives to improve ED wait times, access to care and to explore innovative solutions to divert pressure from our hospitals.

We are excited to say that the 2024-25 NSW Health budget has delivered an ED Relief Package of \$480.7 million over 4 years. A key role of the Taskforce is to support implementation and monitoring of the strategies associated with the ED Relief Package, that includes:

- \$171.4 million over 4 years to expand the 'Single Front Door'
- \$100 million investment in urgent care services for an additional 2 years
- \$70.1 million over 4 years for an additional 22 ED Short Stay Unit beds
- \$53.9 million over 4 years for a discharge and concierge program, to improve patient flow and support discharge planning.
- \$32.8 million over 4 years to implement an AI enhanced clinical coding system
- \$31.4 million over 4 years to expand Hospital in the Home (HiTH) through the use of virtual care
- \$15.1 million over 4 years to develop and implement the NewGen matrix

Here's an update on some of our projects aimed at easing the pressure on our EDs:

- **Transition to selected Hospital Access Targets by 1 July 2024 update:** we're pleased to share that 7 new measures will be implemented from 1 July 2024, including 3 specific to mental health patient flow.

These new measures aim to improve access to care and treatment in NSW EDs, as well as access to ongoing care and treatment in the in-patient setting. Our districts and networks will have a 3-month transition period from the go-live date of 1 July 2024, until 1 October 2024, to ensure a smooth and supported transition.

- **Emergency Care Assessment and Treatment (ECAT) update:** this initiative ensures consistent care is provided to our patients through standardising nurse-initiated protocols. Already 130 NSW Health EDs are using ECAT. Feedback from our frontline ED staff has been positive, especially the ability to work to their optimal scope of practice and the increased range of interventions they can initiate to provide patient care.
- **Optimal Patient Flow Strategies update:** a working group was established to review validated patient flow models of care that should be considered minimum standard within NSW Health hospitals. A gap analysis will now be completed to identify the opportunities to maximise or enhance these models.

We look forward to sharing more updates soon!

Kind Regards,

Dr Trevor Chan
Co-Chair ED Taskforce
Clinical Director, Emergency Care Institute

Matthew Daly
Co-Chair ED Taskforce
Deputy Secretary, System Sustainability and Performance