

ACT public hospital emergency departments (EDs) are open to everyone, providing triage, assessment and treatment for patients suffering from a range of medical conditions as well as providing life-saving care for acutely unwell patients.

The current report presents Quarter 1 and 2, 2023-24 ED data, by location. In interpreting the results, please note the following:

- ED patients requiring resuscitation are attended to immediately by the clinical teams at the time of presentation in the ED. Data available reflects the time the clinical care is recorded in the Digital Health Record (DHR). This is important to note, specifically in relation to the proportion of patients treated within clinically recommended timeframes, for the resuscitation category.
- Data is accurate as of 24 January 2024 and is subject to change.

ACT Total - Activity

Data Highlights

In Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, 2023-24, there were:

- 76,505 ED presentations at ACT public hospitals;
- 17,499 patients that arrived at EDs by ambulance;
- 31,343 admissions to hospitals from EDs; and
- 40,043 patients that were treated and discharged home.

The tables below present monthly data on territory-wide ED activity.

ED Presentations, by month and triage category

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	12,434	12,789	12,579	12,752	12,948	13,003
Resuscitation	78	65	87	57	80	94
Emergency	1,711	1,678	1,689	1,806	1,794	1,705
Urgent	5,415	5,675	5,559	5,554	5,637	5,359
Semi-urgent	4,353	4,432	4,432	4,520	4,565	4,891
Non-urgent	877	939	812	815	872	954

Arrivals at EDs by ambulance, by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	2,948	2,917	2,872	2,969	2,946	2,847

Admissions to hospitals from EDs, by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	5,185	5,298	5,218	5,241	5,116	5,285

Patients treated and discharged home, by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	6,377	6,541	6,396	6,703	6,960	7,066

Canberra Hospital - Activity

Data Highlights

In Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, 2023-24, there were:

- 47,504 ED presentations at the Canberra Hospital;
- 11,595 patients that arrived at the ED by ambulance;
- 21,717 admissions to hospital from the ED; and
- 23,661 patients that were treated and discharged home.

The tables below present monthly data on Canberra Hospital ED activity.

ED Presentations, by month and triage category

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	7,861	8,008	7,735	7,784	8,013	8,103
Resuscitation	62	49	69	44	57	73
Emergency	1,140	1,101	1,142	1,208	1,203	1,135
Urgent	3,048	3,121	3,051	3,165	3,256	3,123
Semi-urgent	2,861	2,921	2,808	2,736	2,865	3,046
Non-urgent	750	816	665	631	632	726

Arrivals at the ED by ambulance, by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	1,984	1,949	1,918	1,906	1,951	1,887

Admissions to hospitals from the ED, by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	3,686	3,738	3,610	3,571	3,492	3,620

Patients treated and discharged home, by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	3,821	3,855	3,685	3,892	4,183	4,225

North Canberra Hospital - Activity

Data Highlights

In Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, 2023-24, there were:

- 29,001 ED presentations at the North Canberra Hospital;
- 5,904 patients that arrived at the ED by ambulance;
- 9,626 admissions to hospital from the ED; and
- 16,382 patients that were treated and discharged home.

The tables below present monthly data on North Canberra Hospital ED activity.

ED Presentations, by month and triage category

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	4,573	4,781	4,844	4,968	4,935	4,900
Resuscitation	16	16	18	13	23	21
Emergency	571	577	547	598	591	570
Urgent	2,367	2,554	2,508	2,389	2,381	2,236
Semi-urgent	1,492	1,511	1,624	1,784	1,700	1,845
Non-urgent	127	123	147	184	240	228

Arrivals at the ED by ambulance, by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	964	968	954	1,063	995	960

Admissions to hospitals from the ED, by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	1,499	1,560	1,608	1,670	1,624	1,665

Patients treated and discharged home, by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	2,556	2,686	2,711	2,811	2,777	2,841

ACT Total - Performance

Data Highlights

In Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, 2023-24:

- 61.8% of patients started ED treatment on time;
- the median wait time to treatment in EDs was 25 minutes;
- 55.6% of patients left the EDs within four hours of presentation; and
- 3.9% of patients did not wait to be seen.

The tables below present monthly data on territory-wide ED performance.

Patients starting treatment on time (%), by month and triage category

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	60.0	59.3	56.8	64.3	62.2	68.1
Resuscitation	100.0	98.5	95.4	96.5	97.5	94.6
Emergency	71.4	73.6	71.4	75.5	71.8	72.1
Urgent	48.5	47.6	46.2	54.2	52.7	57.3
Semi-urgent	63.6	62.6	59.0	67.5	64.7	73.6
Non-urgent	88.1	87.0	82.5	88.5	88.3	92.3

Median wait time to treatment in EDs (minutes), by month and triage category

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	26	28	29	23	24	21
Resuscitation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emergency	7	7	7	6	7	7
Urgent	32	33	35	27	28	25
Semi-urgent	39	40	44	33	37	29
Non-urgent	35	40	49	32	37	30

Patients leaving the ED within four hours of presentation (%), by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	51.6	51.4	51.4	57.5	58.2	63.3

Patients who did not wait to be seen (%), by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	4.4	4.6	4.7	3.4	3.8	2.7

Canberra Hospital - Performance

Data Highlights

In Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, 2023-24:

- 62.1% of patients started ED treatment on time;
- the median wait time to treatment in the ED was 27 minutes;
- 57.2% of patients left the ED within four hours of presentation; and
- 3.2% of patients did not wait to be seen.

The tables below present monthly data on Canberra Hospital ED performance.

Patients starting treatment on time (%), by month and triage category

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	62.6	60.5	56.0	64.0	59.9	69.2
Resuscitation	100.0	98.0	95.7	95.5	96.5	94.5
Emergency	77.9	79.5	76.0	79.7	73.6	78.0
Urgent	48.3	44.3	42.5	51.7	46.5	55.1
Semi-urgent	64.1	62.5	55.3	65.0	62.6	74.5
Non-urgent	89.3	87.1	82.0	89.1	88.0	92.7

Median wait time to treatment in the ED (minutes), by month and triage category

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	27	29	32	25	28	22
Resuscitation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emergency	6	6	7	6	7	7
Urgent	32	36	39	29	34	27
Semi-urgent	41	41	51	38	41	30
Non-urgent	36	40	53	32	41	29

Patients leaving the ED within four hours of presentation (%), by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	54.2	53.2	50.9	58.2	59.1	67.1

Patients who did not wait to be seen (%), by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	3.3	3.7	3.9	2.7	3.0	2.3

North Canberra Hospital - Performance

Data Highlights

In Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, 2023-24:

- 61.4% of patients started ED treatment on time;
- the median wait time to treatment in the ED was 22 minutes;
- 53.1% of patients left the ED within four hours of presentation; and
- 5.2% of patients did not wait to be seen.

The tables below present monthly data on North Canberra Hospital ED performance.

Patients starting treatment on time (%), by month and triage category

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	55.4	57.3	58.0	64.7	66.1	66.1
Resuscitation	100.0	100.0	94.4	100.0	100.0	95.0
Emergency	58.3	62.3	61.7	67.2	68.1	60.3
Urgent	48.8	51.6	50.7	57.5	61.4	60.3
Semi-urgent	62.5	62.9	65.5	71.6	68.5	72.0
Non-urgent	80.6	86.1	85.0	86.1	89.2	90.7

Median wait time to treatment in the ED (minutes), by month and triage category

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	25	25	26	20	18	20
Resuscitation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emergency	9	8	8	7	7	8
Urgent	32	29	30	24	20	22
Semi-urgent	34	37	31	25	28	26
Non-urgent	28	42	34	33	27	32

Patients leaving the ED within four hours of presentation (%), by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	47.1	48.3	52.2	56.3	56.8	57.2

Patients who did not wait to be seen (%), by month

Triage category	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
All	6.1	6.1	5.9	4.5	5.2	3.5

Quarterly Report Technical Supplementary Information

Data Source

This quarterly report draws data from the ACT Non-admitted Patient Emergency Department Care National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) 2023-24. This report reflects clinical information recorded in the DHR at the time the NMDS used for this analysis was created. Data is accurate as of 24 January 2024.

Due to data quality issues related to contemporaneous capture of clinical care in the DHR, data in this report may not reflect the timeline of actual clinical care provided. This is important to note, specifically in relation to the proportion of patients treated within clinically recommended timeframes, for the resuscitation category.

Work to resolve known data reporting issues related to capture of clinical activity in the DHR is ongoing. Canberra Health Services are in the process of establishing business rules to allow for the review of resuscitation data, to more accurately reflect actual clinical care provided.

The ACT Health Directorate's Data Analytics Branch of the Policy, Partnerships and Programs Division extracts the data and calculates activity and performance data presented in this report. Measures are defined (definitions included below) in accordance with accepted standards. Results for each measure are compiled by analysts and peer-reviewed for quality assurance.

Analysis

Activity is conducted at a whole-of-ACT level and at an individual hospital level.

The DHR system was implemented in the ACT in November 2022. As such, comparison of data from this report against those from quarterly performance reports released pre-DHR is not valid as data would have been drawn from different source systems.

Stratification of results by urgency is used to indicate performance against recommended standards. For example, triage categories resuscitation (category 1) to non-urgent (category 5) and the respective service time standards for each category are used to show emergency department performance. More details on the calculation of patients starting treatment on time can be found in the 'Definitions and Methodologies' section.

Definitions and Methodologies

ED presentations

Definition: Number of patient attendances at public hospital EDs that were completed during the time period. As a person may visit an ED in a hospital more than once in a year, the number of presentations is not the same as the number of patients seen by the department.

Methodology:

Number of presentations with a unique state record identifier to an ACT public hospital ED with a valid initial triage category recorded.

Reporting period is determined by the Physical Departure Date.

The triage category represents the urgency of a patient's need for medical and/or nursing care in an ED. The triage category is allocated by an experienced registered nurse or medical practitioner at triage as follows:

- Triage category 1 (resuscitation): seen within seconds, calculated as less than or equal to 2 minutes
- Triage category 2 (emergency): seen within 10 minutes
- Triage category 3 (urgent): seen within 30 minutes
- Triage category 4 (semi-urgent): seen within 60 minutes
- Triage category 5 (non-urgent): seen within 120 minutes.

Quarterly Report Technical Supplementary Information**Definitions and Methodologies (cont.)****Arrivals at ED by ambulance**

Definition: Presentations at ACT public hospital EDs that arrived by ambulance.

Methodology:

- Number of presentations that the patient arrives at the emergency department by ambulance, air ambulance or helicopter rescue service.
- Reporting period is determined by the Physical Departure Date.
- Records are excluded if the initial triage category is missing.

Admissions to hospitals from EDs

Definition: Presentations at ACT public hospital EDs resulting in an admission to the presenting hospital.

Methodology:

- Number of presentations transferred for admitted patient care in the presenting hospital (either short stay unit, hospital-in-the-home or other admitted patient care unit) at the end of the ED service episode.
- Reporting period is determined by the Physical Departure Date.
- Records are excluded if the initial triage category is missing.

Patients treated and discharged home

Definition: Presentations at ACT public hospital EDs resulting in a discharge to home.

Methodology:

- Number of ED completed presentations, including departed without being transferred to a short stay unit, hospital-in-the-home or other admitted patient care unit in this hospital or referred to another hospital.
- Reporting period is determined by the Physical Departure Date.
- Records are included if patients who either departed under their own care, under police custody, under the care of a residential aged care facility or under the care of another carer.
- Records are excluded if patients died in the ED as a non-admitted patient, the initial triage category is missing or the seen date is not populated.

Patients starting treatment on time

Definition: The percentage of patients who are treated within national benchmarks for waiting times, for each triage category, in public hospital emergency departments.

Methodology:

Reporting period is determined by the Physical Departure Date.

Wait time is calculated as the time (in minutes) between when a patient presents at an emergency department for an emergency department service episode, and when clinical care commences.

Records are excluded from both the numerator and denominator if the episode end status is 'Did not wait to be attended by a health care professional' or 'Dead on arrival'.

Numerator: Number of presentations to public hospital emergency departments that were treated within benchmarks for each initial triage category:

- Triage category 1 (resuscitation): seen within seconds, calculated as less than or equal to 2 minutes
- Triage category 2 (emergency): seen within 10 minutes
- Triage category 3 (urgent): seen within 30 minutes
- Triage category 4 (semi-urgent): seen within 60 minutes
- Triage category 5 (non-urgent): seen within 120 minutes.

Denominator: Total presentations of the initial triage category to public hospital emergency departments.

Quarterly Report Technical Supplementary Information**Definitions and Methodologies (cont.)****Median wait time to treatment (minutes) in ED**

Definition: The median length of time, in minutes, waited by patients to the commencement of clinical care, in public hospital EDs.

Methodology:

The number of wait time minutes at the 50th percentile.

Wait time is calculated as the time (in minutes) between when a patient presents at an ED for an ED service episode, and when clinical care commences.

The methodology calculates the 50th percentile based on a discrete distribution of the wait time values. The result is equal to an actual wait time value in the dataset.

Reporting period is determined by the Physical Departure Date.

Records are excluded:

- if the episode end status is 'Did not wait to be attended by a health care professional' or 'Dead on arrival', or 'Registered, advised of another health care service, and left the emergency department without being attended by a health care professional', or
- if the initial triage category is missing.

Patients leaving the ED within four hours of presentation

Definition: For all patients presenting to a public hospital emergency department, the percentage of presentations where the length of the emergency department stay is 4 hours or less.

Methodology:

Reporting period is determined by the Physical Departure Date.

Emergency department stay length is the amount of time, measured in minutes, between when a patient presents at an emergency department, and when the patient physically departs the emergency department.

Records are excluded from both the numerator and denominator if the initial triage category is missing.

Numerator: Number of emergency department presentations where emergency department stay length is less than or equal to four hours.

Denominator: Number of emergency department presentations.

Patients who did not wait to be seen

Definition: Presentations at public hospital EDs with patients departed before being treated.

Methodology:

Number of presentations where the patient did not wait to be attended by a health care professional.

Reporting period is determined by the Physical Departure Date.

Records are excluded if the initial triage category is missing.