



Queensland
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surgical access service

WAITING LIST REDUCTION STRATEGY

*Report from the Surgical Access Service
for the month of*

November 2002

Distribution: Director-General
Minister for Health
General Manager (Health Services)
Deputy Director-General, Policy and Outcomes

1. MANAGEMENT ISSUES

COMMUNICATION

- The Surgical Access Service provided a number of briefings and submissions throughout November to the Office of the Director-General and General Manager (Health Services) (GMHS) including:
 - A briefing to the GMHS relating to the release of Emergency Department performance data;
 - A submission to the GMHS requesting funding to support a proposal from the Royal Brisbane Hospital to undertake additional plastic surgery cases;
 - A submission to the GMHS outlining changes to the quarterly emergency department benchmarking report to be distributed to District Managers, Medical Superintendents and Emergency Department Directors.
- The Surgical Access Service provided a number of briefings throughout November to the Office of the Minister for Health including:
 - A briefing to provide information on local hospital waiting lists for the Minister's visit to the Northern Zone including Cooktown, Mossman and Cairns Districts.
- The Surgical Access Service prepared a response to a FOI request (no.1365) for all documentation from Queensland public hospitals relating to:
 - The number of intra-district ambulance re-diversions from 1 January 2002;
 - The percentage of patients who have waited more than eight hours in emergency departments from 1 January 2002.

CONSULTATION

- The **Medical Superintendent's Advisory Committee** met on 15th November 2002.
- A combined meeting of the **Elective Surgery Coordinators** and **Elective Surgery Liaison Officers** met on 29th November 2002.
- The **Specialist Outpatient Advisory Committee** met on 22nd November 2002.

2. FUNDING & INCENTIVES

- A submission to the GMHS was prepared for increasing elective Plastic Surgery throughput at the Royal Brisbane Hospital (\$587,000). This proposed employment of an additional plastic surgical registrar, and increased usage of operating theatre sessions.
- Advice of financial adjustments for activity not achieved during 2001/02 was forwarded to District Managers for comment, prior to recovery of unused funds. Joint submissions with the Zones are being prepared for December. These funds form the pool of roll-over funding used to purchase additional ES capacity, and establish new services during 2002/03 and 2003/04.
- A suite of management and activity reports has been developed for the Elective Surgery Coordinators at each hospital. These were demonstrated during November, and will be deployed during December and January.

3. PERFORMANCE REPORTING

WAITING LIST

The **total number** of patients on the waiting lists at the reporting hospitals increased from 37,531 at 1 November 2002 to 37,760 at 1 December 2002 (229 patients).

Reporting Date	Category 1			Category 2			Category 3			Total
	Total	No. 'long waits'	% 'long waits'	Total	No. 'long waits'	% 'long waits'	Total	No. 'long waits'	% 'long waits'	
1 Jul 1998	1,285	12	0.9%	9,243	980	10.6%	25,732	7,411	28.8%	36,260
1 Oct 1998	1,441	29	2.0%	9,960	1,464	14.7%	25,538	7,176	28.1%	36,939
1 Dec 1998	1,502	42	2.8%	10,119	1,682	16.6%	25,797	7,354	28.5%	37,418
1 Jan 1999	964	23	2.3%	10,244	1,885	18.4%	26,012	7,309	28.1%	37,220
1 Apr 1999	1,392	26	1.9%	9,953	1,583	15.9%	26,895	7,396	27.5%	38,240
1 Jul 1999	1,498	29	1.9%	9,780	837	8.6%	27,363	7,534	27.5%	38,641
1 Oct 1999	1,468	42	2.9%	9,604	946	9.9%	27,520	7,864	28.6%	38,592
1 Dec 1999	1,439	35	2.4%	9,856	857	8.7%	27,905	8,248	29.6%	39,200
1 Jan 2000	1,165	47	4.0%	9,967	987	9.9%	28,591	8,477	29.6%	39,723
1 Apr 2000	1,721	34	2.0%	9,927	949	9.6%	28,719	8,817	30.7%	40,367
1 Jul 2000	1,838	49	2.7%	10,179	847	8.3%	28,593	9,252	32.4%	40,610
1 Oct 2000	1,749	83	4.7%	10,615	1,250	11.8%	27,650	9,316	33.7%	40,014
1 Dec 2000	1,858	73	3.9%	10,310	1,148	11.1%	27,206	9,431	34.7%	39,374
1 Jan 2001	1,522	70	4.6%	10,675	1,275	11.9%	27,291	9,650	35.4%	39,488
1 Apr 2001	1,833	82	4.5%	11,003	1,244	11.3%	26,847	9,918	36.9%	39,683
1 Jul 2001	2,023	91	4.5%	11,022	1,551	14.1%	26,258	10,044	38.3%	39,303
1 Oct 2001	1,979	90	4.5%	10,783	1,363	12.6%	25,593	9,522	37.2%	38,355
1 Dec 2001	2,080	83	4.0%	10,883	1,367	12.6%	25,194	9,412	37.4%	38,157
1 Jan 2002	1,557	68	4.4%	10,961	1,445	13.2%	25,106	9,518	37.9%	37,624
1 Apr 2002	2,151	72	3.3%	11,343	1,527	13.5%	24,179	9,378	38.8%	37,673
1 Jul 2002	2,496	85	3.4%	11,993	1,270	10.6%	23,494	8,832	37.6%	37,983
1 Oct 2002	2,275	107	4.7%	11,760	1,996	17.0%	23,737	8,841	37.2%	37,772
1 Dec 2002	2,387	48	2.0%	10,944	1,487	13.6%	24,429	9,231	37.8%	37,760

The full list of monthly census data since 1 December 1998 is included at Attachment 1.

Category 1

- At 1 December 2002, the number of 'long wait' Category 1 patients on elective surgery waiting lists was 48 (2.0%). This figure is a decrease of 9 patients from the 57 'long wait' cases (2.5%) reported at 1 November 2002. A total of two (2) hospitals reported in excess of 5% 'long waits'.

Hospital	Category 1	
	Number 'long waits'	Percent 'long waits'
Mt Isa Hospital	3	12.0%
Noosa Hospital	1	7.1%

Category 2

- At 1 December 2002, the number of 'long wait' Category 2 patients on elective surgery waiting lists was 1,487 (13.6%). This is a decrease of 238 patients from the 1,725 (15.3%) 'long waits' reported at 1 November 2002. This compares with 1,367 (12.6%) 'long wait' Category 2 patients at 1 December 2001. A total of sixteen (16) facilities reported 'long wait' patients in excess of the 5% benchmark.

Hospital	Category 2 – 1 December 2002		Category 2 – 1 December 2001	
	Number 'long waits'	Percent 'long waits'	Number 'long waits'	Percent 'long waits'
Bundaberg Hospital	68	21.3%	10	5.3%
Emerald Hospital	2	5.7%	0	0.0%
Gladstone Hospital	2	11.1%	0	0.0%
Gold Coast Hospital	295	22.5%	248	25.9%
Gympie Hospital	8	24.2%	0	0.0%
Hervey Bay Hospital	44	29.1%	8	7.0%
Kingaroy Hospital	1	16.7%	0	0.0%
Mackay Hospital	33	15.5%	26	11.0%
Maryborough Hospital	17	13.1%	6	6.8%
Nambour Hospital	136	23.9%	104	13.2%
Noosa Hospital	86	25.7%	20	7.2%
Princess Alexandra Hospital	101	9.2%	272	21.1%
QEII Hospital	27	5.5%	2	0.5%
Redcliffe Hospital	34	13.9%	8	2.9%
Royal Brisbane Hospital	344	24.3%	353	25.8%
The Townsville Hospital	158	24.6%	127	15.5%

Category 3

- At 1 December 2002, the number of 'long wait' Category 3 patients on elective surgery waiting lists was 9,231 (37.8%). This figure is an increase of 289 patients from the 8,942 cases (37.3%) waiting longer than one year at 1 November 2002. This compares with 9,412 (37.4%) 'long wait' Category 3 patients at 1 December 2001.

THROUGHPUT

Overall **elective surgery throughput** (Category One, Two and Three) has decreased from 10,667 elective surgery admissions in October 2002 to 9,902 in November 2002 (cf. 11,015 in November 2001). Overall elective surgery throughput for the 2002/2003 financial year compared with previous financial years is included in the following table. Throughput for the 2002/2003 financial year is **down by 3.9%** (-1,988 admissions) on the throughput recorded for 2001/2002 and **down by 0.8%** (-294 admissions) on the throughput recorded for 2000/2001.

	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003
Private	10,442	10,593	9,751	8,784	8,009	7,317
Public	38,195	41,739	41,343	40,554	42,373	41,077
Total	48,637	52,332	51,094	49,338	50,382	48,394

Note: Elective admissions data reported via the Elective Admissions Module (EAM) should be considered preliminary. EAM cannot provide weighted separations.

The Queensland Health Admitted Patient Data Collection (QHAPDC) provides final weighted separation data.

4. CLINICAL BEST PRACTICE

1. Emergency Departments

Emergency Department Information - AHCA Renegotiation

- Information relating to emergency department patient referral sources was prepared and provided for the Queensland Health Australian Healthcare Agreement Negotiation Team.
- Input was provided for the draft national paper for health ministers on emergency department attendances and relationship to general practice services.

2. Benchmarking

Emergency Department Waiting Times

- Preliminary waiting time performance data for November 2002 indicates an improved performance in ATS Categories 3 and 5, and a slight decline in other Categories, compared to November 2001. Preliminary data shows a significant improvement in performance from the previous month.

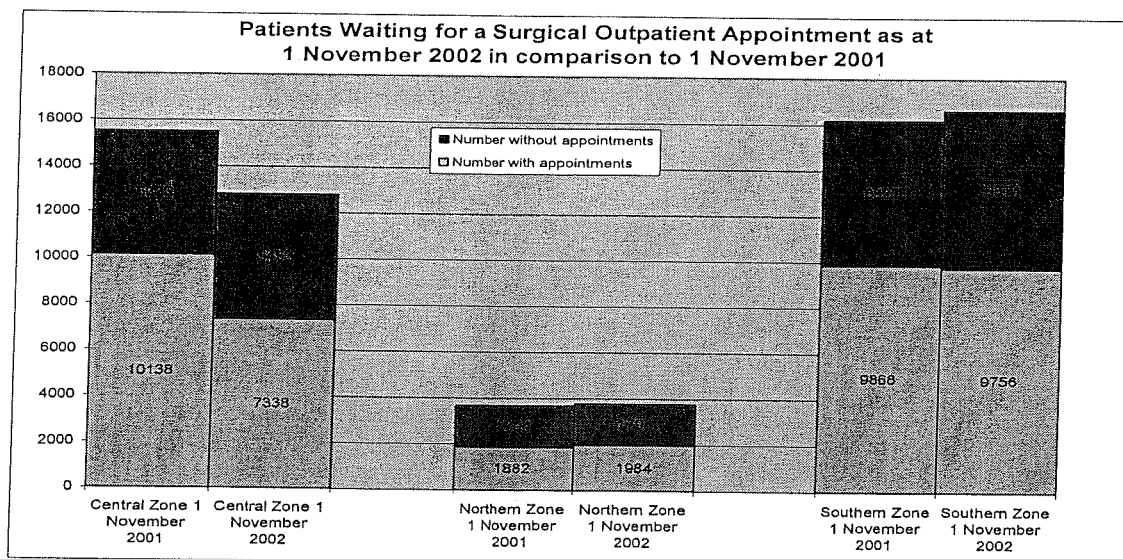
Percentage of patients seen within ACEM recommended times				
	November 2002 ¹ (preliminary)	October 2002 ²	November 2001	Target ³
ATS-1	99%	98%	100%	100%
ATS-2	72%	68%	72%	80%
ATS-3	64%	52%	58%	75%
ATS-4	61%	54%	62%	70%
ATS-5	84%	79%	82%	70%

Notes:

- November 2002 figures do not include Gold Coast Hospital or Princess Alexandra Hospital, as data not available at this time.
- October 2002 figures do not include Gold Coast figures as data not available at this time.
- Red indicates below target.

Specialist Outpatient Services

Patients awaiting an initial surgical outpatient appointment, including those patients with an appointment and those without, are presented on a zonal basis, and compared to the same month of last year.



5. HEALTH SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

1. Emergency Departments

EDIS Implementation

- ▶ In October 2002, the General Manager (Health Services) requested the Surgical Access Service undertake an evaluation of the MedTrak Emergency Department system and provide advice as to its suitability for use in Queensland Emergency Departments. The Surgical Access Service, in consultation with the CIS team organised a one-day workshop on 15 November 2002 whereby representatives from TrakHealth and The Austin Repatriation Medical Centre demonstrated the most current version of the software to a group of Queensland emergency department clinicians.
- ▶ While the MedTrak product did offer some benefits to Queensland emergency departments (eg on-line radiology and pathology, easily interfaces to other TrakHealth moduls), the reference committee assessed the MedTrak Emergency Department System as currently not meeting the needs of Queensland emergency departments. The major functionality deficiencies of the Medtrak Emergency system identified by the reference group included:
 - ▶ There is no pre-hospital event or 'patient expect' screen on the MedTrak system. This functionality was considered to be essential by the reference group. Similarly, the system does not provide ED's with the ability to record retrieval and transfer information
 - ▶ The Department View screen does not provide an updated list of patients waiting and does not have any built in logic to prioritise patients into the order by which they should be seen by the medical officers.
 - ▶ The ability to move patients between cubicles was considered by the reference group to be cumbersome. Likewise the system had limited functionality to track patients who were outside of the department.
- ▶ TrakHealth have indicated that the current version of MedTrak could be developed to meet the identified needs of Queensland emergency departments. The reference committee clearly articulated that proposed developments to MedTrak would only provide functionality equivalent to what already exists in EDIS. Further developments to the MedTrak product beyond this are likely to be costly in terms of dollars and time-frames.

Service Management Agreement (EDIS and ORMIS)

- ▶ The Surgical Access Service finalised the Service Management Agreement with Information Services for the ongoing maintenance and support of the EDIS and ORMIS applications as well as for the maintenance of the Elective Surgery Reporting database (SATR). The total cost for Information Services to provide these services for 2002/2003 is \$151,018, which represents significant savings from the previous year's agreement.

6. HOSPITAL SUPPORT AND LIAISON

1. Medical Superintendents Advisory Committee

The Medical Superintendents Advisory Committee (MSAC) met on the 15th November 2002. The major outcomes from this meeting include:

- ▶ The Committee discussed the letters sent from the General Manager, Health Services requesting the nomination of an accountable officer for elective surgery from each site. Significant restructuring at individual sites has had an impact on the Medical Superintendents involvement in the state-wide elective surgery program.
- ▶ The revised Emergency Department Benchmarking Report was tabled at the meeting for discussion. The Committee were supportive of the revisions made to the report.
- ▶ Dr Michael Catchpole provided an overview to the committee on the Global Recruitment Campaign. Committee members were invited to participate in a telephone assessment of a number of overseas doctors to be held at the Royal Brisbane Hospital in December 2002.
- ▶ The Committee was informed that the Medical Rostering Project has been completed. Members of the Steering Committee are available to discuss the findings.

2. Elective Surgery Coordinators

A combined meeting of **Elective Surgery Coordinators** and **Elective Surgery Liaison Officers** met on the 29th November 2002. The major outcomes from this meeting include:

- ▶ Mr Gary Walker opened the meeting and provided an overview of the *Waiting List Reduction Strategy*. Mr Walker led a lively discussion of the major challenges facing hospitals in 2002/03 in the elective surgery area. Subsequent discussions were very constructive in identifying the major issues affecting elective surgery performance across the State.
- ▶ Members of the Procurement Strategy Unit presented a synopsis of a project they have been working on for the last 12 months - "Progressing Day Surgery - a district and corporate collaborative project". At the conclusion of the presentation, members of the ESC/ESLO group provided feedback to the project team regarding future possibilities.
- ▶ Members of the Marketing and Communications Team addressed the group and advised of how to present Elective Surgery initiatives in a positive light. An overview of how the media machine works and precautions to be exercised when writing reports and discussing issues related to Health were included in the discussion.
- ▶ Members of the SAS provided an overview of the Queensland Health Electronic Reporting System (QHERS). The SAS outlined possibilities for developing Crystal reports to assist in enhancing the day to day management of elective surgery waiting lists.

3. Policy Development

- ▶ Work has continued in relation to the development of state-wide policies to support the Waiting List Reduction Strategy. A draft of the Elective Surgery policy is near completion. It is anticipated the Specialist Outpatient Services draft will also be completed prior to the Christmas Break. The Emergency Department draft will be finalised by January.
- ▶ Focus groups for Elective Surgery and Specialist Outpatient services will be called to meet mid December to review the drafts and determine adjustments required in collaboration with members of the Surgical Access Service.

ATTACHMENT 1 - Census Data by Category and Month

Reporting Date	Category 1		Category 2		Category 3		Total
	Total	% 'long waits'	Total	% 'long waits'	Total	% 'long waits'	
1 Jul 1998	1,285	0.9%	9,243	10.6%	25,732	28.8%	36,260
1 Aug 1998	1,316	1.4%	9,511	11.2%	25,379	28.6%	36,206
1 Sep 1998	1,368	3.1%	9,621	14.1%	25,356	28.0%	36,345
1 Oct 1998	1,441	2.0%	9,960	14.7%	25,538	28.1%	36,939
1 Nov 1998	1,621	2.7%	10,109	15.8%	25,557	28.2%	37,287
1 Dec 1998	1,502	2.8%	10,119	16.6%	25,797	28.5%	37,418
1 Jan 1999	964	2.3%	10,244	18.4%	26,012	28.1%	37,220
1 Feb 1999	1,432	2.0%	10,462	19.4%	26,315	27.7%	38,209
1 Mar 1999	1,432	2.0%	10,337	18.4%	26,440	27.9%	38,209
1 Apr 1999	1,392	1.9%	9,953	15.9%	26,895	27.5%	38,240
1 May 1999	1,336	1.6%	10,275	14.7%	26,953	27.9%	38,564
1 Jun 1999	1,504	2.1%	9,922	12.3%	27,342	27.3%	38,768
1 Jul 1999	1,498	1.9%	9,780	8.6%	27,363	27.5%	38,641
1 Aug 1999	1,419	2.0%	9,929	10.6%	27,418	27.7%	38,766
1 Sep 1999	1,408	3.1%	9,870	11.4%	27,534	27.9%	38,812
1 Oct 1999	1,468	2.9%	9,604	9.9%	27,520	28.6%	38,592
1 Nov 1999	1,445	3.5%	9,614	8.8%	27,621	28.7%	38,680
1 Dec 1999	1,439	2.4%	9,856	8.7%	27,905	29.6%	39,200
1 Jan 2000	1,165	4.0%	9,967	9.9%	28,591	29.6%	39,723
1 Feb 2000	1,496	3.0%	10,141	11.1%	28,667	30.0%	40,304
1 Mar 2000	1,658	1.8%	9,904	11.7%	28,939	30.2%	40,501
1 Apr 2000	1,721	2.0%	9,927	9.6%	28,719	30.7%	40,367
1 May 2000	1,680	2.9%	10,141	9.9%	28,740	31.5%	40,561
1 Jun 2000	1,857	2.4%	10,019	8.4%	28,680	32.0%	40,556
1 Jul 2000	1,838	2.7%	10,179	8.3%	28,593	32.4%	40,610
1 Aug 2000	1,971	4.6%	10,313	10.9%	28,479	32.7%	40,763
1 Sep 2000	1,838	4.5%	10,458	10.7%	27,822	33.0%	40,118
1 Oct 2000	1,749	4.7%	10,615	11.8%	27,650	33.7%	40,014
1 Nov 2000	2,037	3.4%	10,706	12.8%	27,296	34.5%	40,039
1 Dec 2000	1,858	3.9%	10,310	11.1%	27,206	34.7%	39,374
1 Jan 2001	1,522	4.6%	10,675	11.9%	27,291	35.4%	39,488
1 Feb 2001	1,803	3.9%	10,669	12.7%	27,289	35.7%	39,761
1 Mar 2001	1,810	3.4%	10,804	11.9%	26,914	36.3%	39,528
1 Apr 2001	1,833	4.5%	11,003	11.3%	26,847	36.9%	39,683
1 May 2001	1,928	6.2%	11,355	12.7%	26,716	37.5%	39,999
1 Jun 2001	1,907	5.1%	11,129	13.7%	26,611	37.7%	39,647
1 Jul 2001	2,023	4.5%	11,022	14.1%	26,258	38.3%	39,303

ATTACHMENT 1 Continued over page

ATTACHMENT 1 (continued)

Reporting Date	Category 1		Category 2		Category 3		Total
	Total	% 'long waits'	Total	% 'long waits'	Total	% 'long waits'	
1 Aug 2001	2,037	5.1%	10,732	14.3%	25,728	38.0%	38,497
1 Sep 2001	2,017	6.0%	10,762	14.1%	26,028	37.5%	38,807
1 Oct 2001	1,979	4.5%	10,783	12.6%	25,593	37.2%	38,355
1 Nov 2001	2,136	3.8%	10,842	11.6%	25,379	37.4%	38,357
1 Dec 2001	2,080	4.0%	10,883	12.6%	25,194	37.4%	38,157
1 Jan 2002	1,557	4.4%	10,961	13.2%	25,106	37.9%	37,624
1 Feb 2002	1,785	3.7%	11,065	13.5%	24,951	38.3%	37,801
1 Mar 2002	1,938	2.6%	11,096	14.4%	24,461	38.2%	37,495
1 Apr 2002	2,151	3.3%	11,343	13.5%	24,179	38.8%	37,673
1 May 2002	2,229	2.8%	11,551	11.1%	23,718	38.3%	37,498
1 Jun 2002	2,179	2.7%	11,349	9.9%	23,276	38.0%	36,804
1 Jul 2002	2,496	3.4%	11,993	10.6%	23,494	37.6%	37,983
1 Aug 2002	2,306	11.2%	11,704	15.6%	23,910	37.4%	37,920
1 Sep 2002	2,384	7.7%	11,889	16.0%	23,994	37.4%	38,267
1 Oct 2002	2,275	4.7%	11,760	17.0%	23,737	37.2%	37,772
1 Nov 2002	2,323	2.5%	11,243	15.3%	23,965	37.3%	37,531
1 Dec 2002	2,387	2.0%	10,944	13.6%	24,429	37.8%	37,760

Note: Noosa Hospital reported separately from 1 March 2000 and Robina Hospital reported separately from 1 May 2000.

