

New report confirms Victorians' positive experiences of emergency health care

A new report released today by the Victorian Agency for Health Information (VAHI) today reveals that Victorians are generally positive about their experience of emergency health care across the state.

The report details Victorian's experiences of emergency care in 2018–19 across both emergency ambulance services and public hospital emergency departments. The report is based on data from the Victorian Healthcare Experience Survey (VHES), a program of surveys of patients' experiences following use of public healthcare services. The experiences of almost 15,500 Victorians are reflected in the report.

Victorian's experiences of emergency ambulance services continue to be excellent, with 97% of patients reporting positive overall experiences of ambulance care in 2018–19, unchanged from 2017–18. Patients' experiences are consistent across the state, with results across the seven ambulance regions ranging from 95–98%. The survey was completed by almost 5,500 Victorians following their experience with emergency ambulance services.

'Overall, people across the state rate their experiences of emergency ambulance as very positive,' said VAHI CEO Dr Lance Emerson. 'It reflects strong confidence in the services provided by Ambulance Victoria,' he said.

But there is still room for improvement. Particularly in servicing the needs of Aboriginal Victorians, with fewer than 8 in 10 (78%) reporting a positive overall experiences of emergency ambulance care compared with non-Aboriginal Victorians (96%).

The report also details Victorians' experiences of public hospital emergency department care, based on around 10,000 surveys completed during the year.

84% of patients said they had positive overall experiences of emergency department care in 2018–19, a slight improvement on 2017–18 (83%). Results varied by emergency department across the state, ranging from 69% to 95%.

'Overall, the results for emergency departments are strong, but the variation in results suggests that some emergency departments are providing better patient experiences than others,' said Dr Emerson.

'That's why we report on patients' experiences. You not only get a picture of the overall performance, but also see where there are opportunities for health services to better meet patients' expectations of the care they receive,' he said.

An example of an area for improvement is in delivering information to patients. Across the state, only 58% of patients said they received enough information about their condition and treatment while they were in the emergency department.

'Using these data, health services can start to target improvement strategies,' he said.

The report includes an example of a health service that has responded to its results in this area and have achieved a better outcome for their patients based on this early finding.

Access the report at <https://www.bettersafecare.vic.gov.au/reports-and-publications/adult-experiences-of-emergency-care-in-victoria-2018-19>.

About the Victorian Agency for Health Information

The Victorian Agency for Health Information (VAHI) was established as an Administrative Office of the Victorian Government on 1 July 2017. VAHI analyses and shares information across the health system to ensure everyone has an accurate picture of the quality and safety of health services across Victoria. VAHI's responsibilities flow across measurement of patient care and outcomes for three key purposes: public reporting, oversight and clinical improvement.