

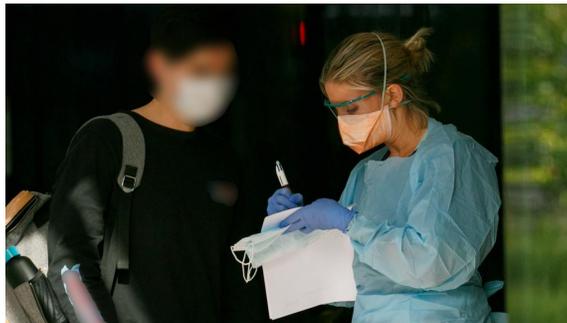
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Northern Beaches Hospital saw huge leap in coronavirus patients according to latest health stats

A new health report has revealed how many people hospitals were seeing during the height of the coronavirus and how Northern Beaches Hospital performed.

Julie Cross, Manly Daily

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 Patient in mask been seen by triage nurse at Northern Beaches Hospital's COVID-19 clinic. Picture: Tim Pascoe

A special report on what happened inside our hospitals during the peak of the coronavirus crisis has revealed Northern Beaches Hospital saw one of the highest number of patients with suspected COVID-19 symptoms.

The Frenchs Forest hospital recorded an increase of 1732 non-urgent cases during March.

It was the fourth highest increase in presentations across the state, according to the Bureau of Health Information's special COVID-19 report focusing on just that one month.

It stated that preliminary analysis indicated that the vast majority of these additional non-urgent presentations were identified as presumed or suspected COVID-19 and started in the weeks before dedicated COVID-19 clinics were established to process these cases.



COVID-19 nurses Matei Andrin and Helen Meischke.
Picture: Julian Andrews.

But the report also found while non-urgent cases increased, other more urgent cases decreased in March, as patients stayed away from hospitals.

The BHI's has also released its quarterly report looking at figures from January to March.

It was “an unprecedented quarter for the people of the state and their healthcare system”, according to Dr Diane Watson BHI's chief executive.

She said the last quarter was over a period that included bushfires and a pandemic.

Northern Beaches Hospital saw an additional 3083 patients or a total of 18,169 attend the



Andrew Newton, CEO of Northern Beaches Hospital.
Picture: Julie Cross.

Emergency Department in the quarter – up 20.4 per cent on the same time last year.

The number of patients treated within the recommended time frame was 81.6 per cent, up from 63.1 per cent in the same quarter the previous year.

There was also an increase in the number and the urgency of cases presenting to the Emergency Department with 10,661 people in the top three urgency categories – compared to 9,484 in the previous quarter.

Andrew Newton, chief executive of NBH, said the hospital had achieved excellent results in all categories measured by the BHI including emergency department treatment and elective surgery.

“Northern Beaches Hospital has become a leader in the field over the last year,” he said.

“The communities of the northern beaches can have confidence that their local hospital can provide timely and efficient healthcare close to their home.

“These great improvements were a credit to the hard work of the dedicated doctors, nurses and support staff in the emergency department and throughout the hospital.”

The number of babies being born during the quarter were down from 405 to 386 compared with the same quarter last year.

A spokesman for the hospital said births were down at most hospitals across the state in line with population trends.