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Northern Beaches Hospital: Latest health report shows highest number of ED presentations yet

The latest figures show that more people attended Northern Beaches Hospital's emergency department than ever before, and that's before COVID-19 hit.

[Julie Cross](#), Manly Daily

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More people attended emergency departments in NSW public hospitals during October to December last year than any previous quarter, with Northern Beaches Hospital no exception.

The sobering statistics come as hospital staff prepare for an unprecedented numbers of sick patients due to the coronavirus crisis.

A source at the hospital said this week that the number of people attending the new COVID-19 clinic had doubled on the previous week to around 100 a day.



📷 Northern Beaches Hospital has set up a COVID-19 clinic next to its emergency department. Picture: Tim Pascoe.

Mona Vale Hospital has also opened a special coronavirus clinic which saw queues of around 40 people on Monday.

According to the latest Bureau of Health Information report there were more than 776,000 emergency department attendances across NSW public hospitals in the October to December 2019 quarter – up 3.6 per cent (26,787) compared with the same quarter in 2018.

The number of arrivals by ambulance was up 5.5 per cent (9,370) to 178,465.

At Northern Beaches Hospital 16,903 attended the emergency department between October and December, higher than over the winter period last year when July to September saw 15,428 people attend the emergency department and April to June saw 15,670.

About 80 per cent of patients at Northern Beaches Hospital started treatment on time compared with around 72.6 per cent across NSW.



Around 79 per cent spent four hours or less in the emergency department compared with the average across the state of 69.8 per cent, while 99 per cent of ambulance patients had their care transferred to emergency department staff within half an hour.

BHI Chief Executive Dr Diane Watson said the high levels of ED activity in October to December 2019 reflect an ongoing trend of increased demand, which has been particularly evident since the last quarter of 2018.

“These latest results also show a typical patient in NSW will have waited slightly longer for their treatment to start in the ED and spent slightly more time in the ED overall. However, there is considerable variation in performance when you look at the results for individual hospitals,” Dr Watson said.