

Deputy Premier and Minister for Health  
The Honourable Paul Lucas  
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## **NEW DATA TO GIVE PUBLIC BETTER INFO ON EDS**

Deputy Premier and Minister for Health Paul Lucas has announced a new initiative to give the public greater access to information about their hospital emergency departments.

Mr Lucas said the initiative would for the first time see comprehensive emergency department (ED) data, including access block, wait times, and attendances by hospital and by triage category, published regularly on the Queensland Health website.

"Queensland already reports more comprehensive data than any other state, for example the Quarterly Public Hospitals Performance Report contains more than 1800 separate statistics in every report," Mr Lucas said.

"Queensland Health's data reporting makes the My School website look light-on," he said.

Queensland Health already reports on:

- Elective surgery waiting times by category, by long waits, by hospital
- Elective surgery patients treated by category, by long waits, by hospital
- Hospital admissions
- People receiving same day care
- Outpatient services
- Babies born
- Radiation Oncology wait times
- Patient Satisfaction
- Staff satisfaction
- Staffing numbers
- Bed numbers
- ED admissions, attendances, performance and access block

"Our elective surgery waiting times continue to be the best in Australia at 27 days compared to a national average of 34 days.

"And while our ED performance has moved from sixth to third we know we can do better.

"That's why we have committed to regularly publishing this additional data - because its an area where we saw we could give the public more information about how their emergency departments are travelling.

"The December data shows that the average waiting time for non-urgent cases across the State is just 44 minutes.

"But people can get more information than that. They can see that the average wait time in December for non-urgent patients at Townsville, for example, is just 34 minutes.

"It also shows the percentage of patients in each category who did not wait after they were initially seen.

"If people can see how their local ED is travelling then it will enable them to make a decision about whether, in non-urgent cases, it is more appropriate to go to their GP.

"This is a great new initiative for health in 2010," Mr Lucas said.

The new emergency department data is currently manually uploaded by clinicians in every ED and used by them to monitor and assess how their ED is travelling.

The data changes regularly and is not a measure of performance, rather it is a collection of data that enables clinicians to identify where there are pressure points in the ED and thus where resources and staff need to be re-allocated.

"But we also recognise the value of this data to the broader community, which is why we have made the decision to publish it regularly.

Queensland Health will begin uploading the January data as soon as it becomes available, but is also in the process of developing a system to enable the data to be uploaded more regularly.

"Accountability breeds excellence: the more we report the better the indication we have of where we can improve," Mr Lucas said.

"Every time the Opposition makes a claim based on Queensland Health's own figures Queenslanders should remember that when the Coalition had a chance to demonstrate their accountability they produced nothing."