

Sydney Children's Hospital & Community Child Health Services

Children's Hospital and Community Child Health Services (SCH) has multilevel roles. It serves the local community as a lead paediatric agency for SESIH and the Greater Eastern and Southern NSW Child Health Network (GESCHN), and at a State and national level in contributing to the direction of child health services.

The hospital is an internationally recognised centre of excellence for child health with a full range of specialist services treating children from all over NSW and Australia with many conditions including cancer, trauma, HIV/AIDS, congenital abnormalities, heart disease and respiratory disorders.

Summary of business activity

- > In 2005-06, SCH admitted 14,178 patients and treated another 289,351 children through its emergency, outpatient, regional outreach service and 11 early childhood health centres.
- > On average, an additional five beds were made available during the year to accommodate this additional activity. The increased length of stay remains driven by increased complexity.
- > The patient mix is 55 per cent non-local residents, with the complexity of these patient admissions 44 per cent greater than local residents.
- > At June 2006, no patient on the waiting list had waited more than 12 months for admission with no patient waiting longer than one month in the most urgent waiting list category.
- > Bed occupancy rates rose above 98 per cent during August and September - the busiest period - and averaged 92 per cent for the year.
- > The number of presentations to the Emergency Department rose by nine per cent to 31,688.
- > The rate of Day of Surgery admissions was maintained consistently during 2005-06 and, at times, exceeded the NSW benchmark of 80 per cent.

Major goals and outcomes

- > A review of the Outpatient Department involved mapping departmental processes, establishing baseline data, exploring areas for improvement from a consumer perspective, developing an action plan to implement change and engaging key stakeholders. Results from this project will be progressed this year.
- > The Practice Development Unit was redeveloped to support staff using the latest research on best practice in their day-to-day work.
- > Two transitional Nurse Practitioners were appointed to the Emergency Department.
- > The Rural Paediatric Locum and Support Service was

expanded to cover all rural NSW paediatricians and enhance education resources coordinated through the Northern, Greater Eastern and Southern Child Health networks.

- > The Inaugural Graduation was held for long-term adolescent patients who are transitioning to adult services.

Key issues and events

- > SCH celebrated the 10th anniversary of its name change from Prince of Wales Children's Hospital.
- > The NSW Government committed an additional \$2 million as part of a 2006-07 Budget boost for a Paediatric Intensive Care Unit and an additional acute care bed costing \$200,000.
- > Health Educators launched a series of biology workshops for HSC students. The workshops cover topics such as genetics, blood and blood products and infectious diseases, all mandatory parts of the HSC syllabus.
- > Granting an MRI licence for paediatric patients and establishing a new campus facility with two new MRI scanners.
- > The teams at the Centre for Children's Cancer and Blood Disorders, SCH and Children's Cancer Institute Australia, UNSW, received two major grants to further research into childhood cancers.

Future directions

- > Progress e-Learning mechanisms throughout SCH to maximise education potential and efficient use of resources.
- > Develop a virtual tour on the SCH website to help eliminate the fears of children coming to hospital.
- > Preparing Children for Hospitalisation Project - focus groups feedback will guide action research strategies.
- > Continue research into teamwork through various projects.
- > Continue initiatives in Aboriginal child health, including several new projects and the inaugural Aboriginal Child Health Workshop run by the GESCHN.