

Case Study Health Services

The Northern Hospital

NORTHERN HOSPITAL, SECOND TO TRIAL SUCCESSFUL WATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Northern Hospital is the largest of Northern Health's four facilities. In terms of bed numbers, The Northern Hospital has 257 beds and could be categorised as a medium sized hospital yet it is in the top 200 water users in Melbourne and uses an average of 60-65 kilolitres of water pa. Not surprising considering that health procedures, on average, use a lot of water. This comes with the territory of looking after people.

For a health service, however, that was opened in February 1998, The Northern Hospital has seen a 50% increase of inpatient throughput and a staggering 60% plus increase in Emergency Department procedures over the last five years. Between 1999 and 2004, inpatient numbers at the Hospital have risen from 22,626 to over 31,000, and the numbers of people treated at the Emergency Department have risen from 38, 570 to more than 62,000 patients in the corresponding period. Imagine the hand wash procedures that occur each day!

The Northern Hospital's Emergency Department is the busiest of ANY public hospital in Victoria and its treatment of patients within agreed ideal times, as specified by the Department of Human Services, remains among the best performing; a proud record. 100% of Category One patients, the most serious, are seen immediately, with 98% of Category Two patients seen within the ideal allocated time (ten minutes) and 97% of Category Three patients seen within (30 minutes) the ideal time for this category.

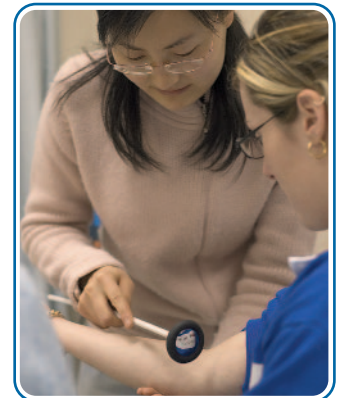
Following a successful pilot carried out at sister facility Broadmeadows Health Service, which showed a 19% reduction in total water use over the 2004 /05 financial year, The Northern Hospital is taking part in Northern Health's **savewater! efficiency service** pilot; a water management planning program part funded by the Department of Human Services.

To verify data over the next twelve months, water consumption at The Northern Hospital is being remotely monitored by check meters that are sending back specific usage information. This methodology will ensure that corresponding data gained from sites implementing **savewater! efficiency service** water saving programs is accurate.

At the end of the process The Northern Hospital is aiming to equal the water savings gained at Broadmeadows Health Service and use the same 'payment by savings' plan, provided by the water retailer, to fund the program.

The hospital has adopted 'litres of water per patient bed day' as the measurable benchmark of water efficient use. This benchmark will be reviewed over the next 12 months to determine the percentage efficiency increase in water per patient bed day.

Definitions: in-patient - any patient admitted to a bed within a ward



Further information

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