



Hospital in the Home

As demand for healthcare continues to grow Australia's public hospitals can sometimes find themselves under pressure. One way to reduce pressure on public hospitals is to reduce the number of avoidable admissions. In 2015–16 there were more than 715,000 hospitalisations for conditions that were considered potentially preventable, and the majority (47%) of these were for chronic conditions.

Hospital in the Home (HITH) is one option for reducing admissions to hospital. HITH programs provide active treatment in a patient's home for conditions that would otherwise require admission to hospital. Programs may result in avoiding admission completely or may allow early discharge reducing the length of the admission.

For selected patient groups including pneumonia, deep vein thrombosis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, HITH programs have been shown to:

- reduce mortality;
- reduce readmissions to hospital;
- reduce costs;
- increase patients and carer satisfaction.

- ✦ Funding models must support the provision of safe, effective, patient-centred care in the most appropriate environment.
- ✦ Activity-based funding models can encourage adoption of innovative cost-effective service models by the hospital sector.
- ✦ While hospitals currently fund a range of HITH programs, other primary care and community-based providers need a defined funding source to encourage further expansion of services
- ✦ The effective governance of HITH programs requires well developed communication and collaboration between service providers. The roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in care delivery must be clearly defined.
- ✦ The development and expansion of programs and bundled funding packages that support safe, appropriate and cost-effective home-based alternatives to hospital admission must be a priority for governments and health services.

AHHA POSITION:

- ✦ Innovative approaches to health service delivery are necessary to reduce demand on hospitals and help contain costs.
- ✦ HITH programs are a safe, appropriate and cost-effective alternative for a range of patient groups.
- ✦ HITH programs can reduce unnecessary admissions to hospital, releasing resources to care for those for whom hospital admission is the only option.
- ✦ Decreasing avoidable admissions can reduce 'bed-block', which in turn helps hospitals achieve emergency department and elective surgery performance targets.

For information: Alison Verhoeven, Chief Executive, 0403 282 501