

Home hospital helps to clear waiting lists



Eric McMann receives intravenous antibiotics from Clinical Service Coordinator Lisa Bartholomaeus at his home yesterday. Picture: Matt TurnerSource: The Advertiser

HUNDREDS of thousands of public hospital patients could be treated at home, a report shows.

The Hospital in the Home Society of Australasia commissioned the study by Deloitte Access Economics that compared health outcomes and costs of care for patients with six common conditions.

Society president Associate Professor Gideon Caplan says the report shows hospital in the home is the best way to deal with the rising burden of chronic illness.

"When well integrated with emergency departments, hospital in the home helps shorten waiting lists, reduce unnecessary admissions, frees up beds and allows the limited resources of hospitals to be directed towards patients who need them the most," he said.

"Hospital-standard care delivered in the home often delivers better clinical results and is safer for patients.

Health Minister John Hill says the State Government is open to "new ideas and initiatives that help keep people healthy and out of hospital".

"This year we started a new program called Health Care at Home, providing short-term care for patients of all ages to help them either avoid having to go to hospital or to stay well after discharge," he said.

"The service is provided by the Royal District Nursing Service, who, along with their partners in Silverchain, are the recognised leaders in home care, and in the first six months of this year had received a total of 7848 referrals."

The clinical service coordinator for Hospital at Home at the Lyell McEwin Hospital, Lisa Bartholomaeus, says the service, running since 1995, takes between 45 and 70 patients at a time out of the hospital system.

"That's equivalent to two whole wards in the hospital," she said.

"Other hospitals do have a service with the same model. It's well utilised but even those are at capacity. We need ongoing funding."

Eric McMann, 55, from Parafield Gardens is receiving intravenous antibiotics for an infection in his heart.

He needs six weeks' treatment, so is glad he can be treated by a medical team at his home, rather than having to remain in hospital.

Source:

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<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/home-hospital-helps-to-clear-waiting-lists/story-e6frea6u-1226137210847>