



ST VINCENT'S
HEALTH NETWORK
SYDNEY



Safety and Quality Account

St Vincent's Health Network Sydney
2024-2025

Better and
fairer care.
Always.



Dalarinji – “Ours Belonging to Us”. Artist: Lani Balzan

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the land of the Gadigal and Bidjigal People of the Eora Nation; as well as the Dharug Nation on which our services are built. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and we walk and work together in the journey of improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Outcomes.

CONTENTS

1. St Vincent’s Health Network	4
Message from the Chief Executive Officer	4
2. Achievements over the past 12 months	5
Heart Summit	5
BiVACOR	5
Accreditation	6
Emergency Access	6
Surgery	6
3. Patient Experience and Outcomes	7
Clinical Governance Framework	7
Patient Feedback	8
Hospital-Acquired Complications (HACs)	9
Death Reviews	9
4. Patients and Carers Have Positive Experiences and Outcomes That Matter	10
Venous Thromboembolism (VTE)	10
Delirium	10
5. Our People	11
Capability	11
OK STOP	11
Staff Survey Engagement	12
Anti-Racism Policy	12
Sexuality and Gender Diversity	13
6. Health System is Managed Sustainably	14
DeliverEASE	14
7. Research	15
Clinical Trials	15
Theranostics	15
8. Future Focus	16
Aboriginal Health Outcomes	16
Mental Health Outcomes	16
Care Pathways: Safe and Quality Care with Patient Activation	17
Non-Admitted Service (NAS) Redesign Project	17
Enhancing Emergency Access	17

| 1. ST VINCENT'S HEALTH NETWORK

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

The past year has been one of remarkable progress across St Vincent's Health Network Sydney. As we reflect on 2025, we do so with great pride in our people; our clinicians, support staff, researchers, volunteers, and partners, whose dedication continues to define our mission of delivering better and fairer care for our community. In a complex and rapidly evolving health landscape, our focus has remained clear - to provide safe, high-quality care that places patients and families at the centre, especially for our most vulnerable populations. A significant foundation of this work has been the establishment of the St Vincent's Sydney Clinical Governance Framework, a system-wide approach that clarifies accountability, strengthens leadership, and embeds a culture of learning and continuous improvement.

This report highlights how, together, we have strengthened our systems, policies and processes, empowered staff and supported their professional development, and embedded innovation in the very fabric of our organisation. From achieving and sustaining excellence across all eight National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, to transforming our approach to Hospital Acquired Complications, to enhancing access to both planned and unplanned care, and delivering Australia's first BiVACOR Total Artificial Heart, St Vincent's Hospital Network Sydney continues to lead with purpose and integrity.

A central focus over the past year has been advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing. The implementation of the Aboriginal Health Strategy and expansion of initiatives such as the Flexi Clinic, have reinforced our commitment to enhancing outcomes and experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

As always at St Vincent's, our people remain at the heart of this success. Initiatives such as OK STOP, our staff-led hot debrief model, reflect a culture that values reflection, learning, and wellbeing. The

continued rollout of the Safety and Quality Essentials Pathway and AIM Program has built capability across disciplines, empowering teams to drive improvement from the ground up and supporting a true culture in continuous improvement across all levels of the organisation. Our ongoing leadership in diversity and inclusion demonstrate our commitment to a workplace where every person is respected, supported, and heard.

Equally inspiring is our leadership in research and innovation. Through landmark clinical trials and partnerships, St Vincent's continues to bridge discovery and care, providing patients with access to emerging therapies and life-changing technologies. These efforts reaffirm our role as a national leader in translational medicine and person-centred innovation.

As we look ahead, our priorities are clear - to sustain system-wide improvement, strengthen our learning culture, and ensure that every patient and carer experiences care that is safe, effective, connected, and personalised. None of this would be possible without our extraordinary people, whose skill, kindness, and commitment bring our mission to life each day.

To everyone who contributes to this work - a resounding thank you. Your passion and professionalism continue to inspire, and together, we will keep building a future where excellence in safety, quality, and compassion defines every interaction at St Vincent's.



Anna McFadgen
Chief Executive Officer
St Vincent's Health Network Sydney

| 2. ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Celebrating progress, innovation, and compassion across our Network. Each of these highlights reflects our shared commitment to delivering world-class care that is safe, inclusive, and person-centred.

In 2025, St Vincent's Health Network Sydney continued to enhance patient outcomes and experiences, facilitated through partnerships, an innovation culture and a focus on delivering excellence in healthcare.

Heart Summit

The inaugural St Vincent's National Heart Health Summit brought together more than 300 cardiac leaders, researchers, and clinicians from across Australia. This national gathering showcased St Vincent's leadership in cardiac care, education and research, and provided a platform for sharing innovation and best practice to shape the future of heart health.

The Summit focused on collaboration and connection, highlighting opportunities to develop new clinical models, scale translational research, and invest in digital transformation. A key outcome of the Summit is the establishment of the St Vincent's Heart Health Alliance. The Alliance is a national collaboration dedicated to advancing research, education, and service delivery across three

states. This initiative will continue to drive equity, innovation, and sustainability in cardiac care across Australia.

BiVACOR

St Vincent's once again demonstrated its world-leading expertise in cardiac innovation with the successful implantation of Australia's first BiVACOR Total Artificial Heart. This breakthrough procedure marks a new era in cardiac surgery and offers renewed hope for patients living with advanced heart failure.

Led by Dr Paul Jansz and supported by Professor Chris Hayward's multidisciplinary team, the surgery represents decades of collaboration between St Vincent's Hospital Sydney and the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute. The BiVACOR device; a titanium heart with a single moving part and no valves, eliminates mechanical wear and is designed to operate as a permanent replacement for the human heart.

The first patient to receive the BiVACOR Total Artificial Heart became the first in the world to leave hospital with the device in place, later successfully receiving a donor transplant after more than 100 days. This extraordinary milestone reinforces St Vincent's position at the forefront of global heart health and research.



Accreditation

Accreditation remains a cornerstone of St Vincent's commitment to quality, safety, and accountability. In August 2024, the Network achieved full compliance across all eight National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards, with every applicable action rated 'Met' and no recommendations received or follow-up required.

This result reflects the dedication of staff to patient safety and experience, as well as the strength of our governance systems. It also recognises the successful closure of all previous recommendations, demonstrating the commitment from our St Vincent's teams to continuous improvement. The Research and Clinical Trials portfolio received a 3/3 maturity rating from the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, an endorsement of excellence in governance and consumer partnership for research and clinical trials.

The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards surveyors commended the Network for its strong leadership, integrated systems, and safety-focused workforce culture. Work is now underway to establish a Network-wide Accreditation Framework to sustain readiness and strengthen alignment with clinical standards into the future.

Emergency Access

Transfer of Care (TOC)

A comprehensive review of Emergency Department and patient-flow escalation processes enhanced oversight of ambulance arrivals and streamlined coordination between teams.

The initiative aimed to reduce congestion and improve patient flow by refining escalation protocols and proactive bed management.

Key results included:

- Faster admission times and improved visibility of patient-flow data.
- More efficient use of hospital bed base.
- Strengthened collaboration between ED and inpatient units, supporting timely discharge and safer transitions of care.

The focussed approach has successfully achieved an improvement in TOC - with results demonstrating a sustained performance above target (90%) over the past financial year.

Surgery

Triple Zero Planned Surgery KPI

Throughout 2025, the Network has maintained performance against 'Triple 0', with no elective surgery patients waiting longer than their clinically recommended time for elective surgery. This outcome reflects a continued commitment to timely, safe, and equitable access to surgical care, ensuring patients experience minimal delay and optimal outcomes.

Surgery System Support

With sustained pressure on elective surgery waiting lists across the system, St Vincent's partnered with NSW Health to support additional elective surgery to be undertaken, particularly for patients from rural and regional NSW. During 2024-25, St Vincent's supported an additional 96 patients to receive their elective surgery, all while maintaining timely access for patients referred directly to the Network. This collaboration demonstrated St Vincent's strong system capability, adaptability, and commitment to enhancing access to healthcare for the community of NSW.



| 3. PATIENT EXPERIENCE AND OUTCOMES

At the heart of St Vincent’s work is the experience of every patient and family. These initiatives focused on listening to consumers, strengthening clinical governance, and ensuring our systems deliver care that is safe, effective, personalised and connected.

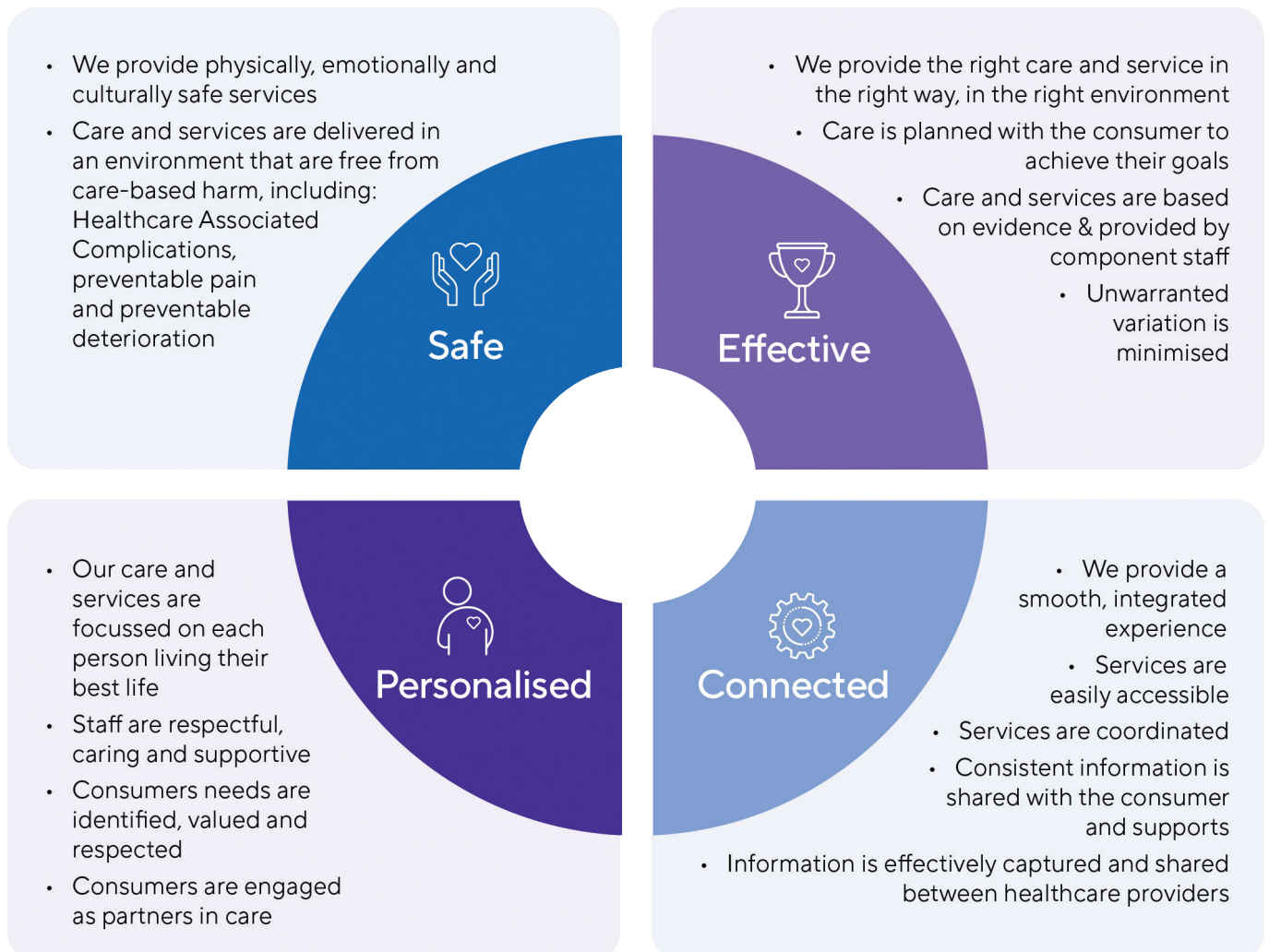
Clinical Governance Framework

Over the past year, St Vincent’s Health Network (SVHN) has developed a new Clinical Governance Framework to strengthen our commitment to delivering safe, high quality care. Designed with input from over 200 clinicians and managers, the Framework provides clarity on roles, responsibilities and accountability across the organisation, from frontline clinicians, patients and consumers to executive leadership and the Board.

The Framework is guided by four core goals: Safe, Effective, Personalised and Connected Care. It reflects modern approaches to safety, moving from traditional Safety I methods, which focus on error prevention, towards Safety II principles that emphasise harm reduction, learning and continuous improvement. A key focus of the Framework was to foster a just and inclusive culture that minimises blame, supports psychological safety and encourages collaboration to strengthen teamwork and overall patient safety.

Officially launched in February 2025, the Framework received strong engagement, with over 100 staff attending the launch in person and more than 200 participating online. Broad consultation ensured diverse perspectives were captured, and implementation is now well underway across SVHNS.

Goals of clinical governance



Patient Feedback

Overall

In 2025, St Vincent’s Health Network Sydney strengthened its approach to patient experience by establishing a dedicated Patient Experience and Engagement Team. This integrated team brought together the portfolios of Feedback, Consumer Engagement, Patient Reported Measures, Sexuality and Gender Diversity, and Diversity and Health Literacy to create a cohesive and coordinated model for improving the patient experience across all services. The aim was to ensure that every patient voice, from compliments and complaints to consumer partnership and lived experience input, contributes meaningfully to continuous improvement and better patient outcomes and experience. This holistic approach has embedded patient perspectives into the organisation’s governance structures and service planning, ensuring care is informed by the people who receive it.

The impact of this work has been significant. St Vincent’s achieved Platinum status in the Health & Wellbeing Equality Index for LGBTQ+ inclusive service delivery, delivered trans-inclusive practice training to more than 140 staff, and expanded BindiMaps wayfinding technology to enhance accessibility for patients and visitors.

Feedback processes have become more transparent and efficient, with KPIs for acknowledgement and resolution consistently met or exceeded. A sustainable system for consumer representation has also been embedded, ensuring regular engagement in key committees and clear governance around engagement and remuneration. These achievements demonstrate a genuine commitment to patient-centred care, equity, and inclusion.

NPS Results

Patient experience continues to be measured through Net Promoter Score (NPS) surveys, which provide valuable insights into how patients perceive their care and their likelihood to recommend St Vincent’s services. These results serve as a key indicator of satisfaction and help identify both strengths and opportunities for improvement.

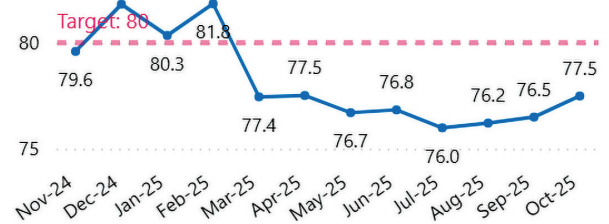
Throughout 2025, the Network recorded continued improvement in patient experience measures. Scores for Unplanned Admissions (Public Only) consistently exceeded targets, reflecting strong coordination of care and patient trust. Following a decrease in Planned (Elective) Admissions NPS in March, recent months have seen a strong recovery, with scores trending towards the target.

Patients frequently highlighted the professionalism, empathy, and compassion of St Vincent’s staff as defining features of their experience, alongside a strong sense of being welcomed and supported. Areas such as waiting times and communication during peak demand have been identified as opportunities for improvement and are being actively addressed through governance forums, such as the Standard 2 ‘Partnering with Consumers’ Committee (in line with our developing Accreditation Framework).

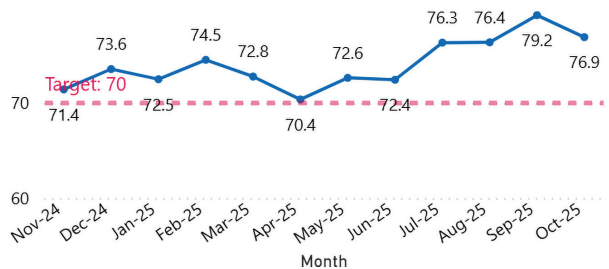
In response to identified trends in patient feedback and experience measures, the organisation has prioritised work on Care Pathways as a key focus area. This initiative aims to ensure that patient’s needs are met through improved experience, shared decision-making and patients self-management of their care needs, supporting a more seamless and personalised care journey.

Positive feedback is shared regularly across the Network through our Daily Management Systems, daily communication bulletin and established reward and recognition programs, ensuring that success stories, as well as opportunities for improvement, are celebrated and learnings are shared. These results reflect a culture deeply committed to listening, learning, and improving in partnership with patients and families.

Planned NPS (Rolling 3-Month)



Unplanned NPS (Rolling 3-Month)





Hospital-Acquired Complications (HACs)

Reducing hospital-acquired complications remains a cornerstone of St Vincent's patient-safety strategy and a key indicator of clinical performance. In FY24 Q4, the Network recorded 361 HACs per 10 000 episodes, a rate above benchmark and target, prompting a coordinated improvement program focused on data transparency, clinical ownership, and prevention at the bedside.

The initiative began with a comprehensive data-validation review to ensure data accuracy and visibility across all streams. Clinical leaders were engaged early through targeted education and monthly HAC review forums, allowing real-time discussion of cases, contributing factors, and system opportunities. Under-performing HACs were identified and addressed through tailored improvement plans supported by the Patient Safety and Quality Unit and the Improvement Team.

Within twelve months, this focused approach achieved measurable and sustained results. Review rates consistently exceeded 85 percent, under-performing HACs dropped from 4 to none, and the overall HAC rate improved to 190 per 10 000 episodes, the lowest ever recorded for the Network. This body of work was recognised externally, with St Vincent's named a finalist in the 2025 NSW Health Awards for its innovation and measurable improvement in patient safety.

The program's success reflects a strengthened culture of shared accountability and proactive learning, where teams collaborate to identify risks early, address system issues, and sustain improvements in patient outcomes. This recognition also reaffirms St Vincent's commitment to clinical excellence and its leadership role in advancing patient safety across the state.

Death Reviews

A robust mortality review process is essential to learning from every patient death and ensuring safe, high-quality care. At St Vincent's, the Death Review Portfolio plays a pivotal role in translating clinical findings into system improvement.

In mid-2024, historical systems and processes for death reviews had contributed to a backlog of cases, placing compliance with the Clinical Excellence Commission's 45-day KPI at risk. Recognising the importance of timely review, a multidisciplinary improvement project was launched to redesign the process and strengthen governance. Clear accountabilities were established across clinical streams, screening tools were standardised, and a tracking system was introduced to improve oversight and transparency.

By June 2025, 100 percent of death reviews were completed within the 45-day timeframe. Training programs expanded the pool of reviewers, embedding death screening as a routine, sustainable activity across specialties and reducing reliance on individual staff.

Beyond compliance, the new model has shifted the purpose of death reviews from a reporting obligation to a genuine learning opportunity. Findings are now systematically shared through governance committees, informing quality initiatives and improving end-of-life care. This renewed focus on learning, accountability, and compassion ensures that every review contributes to safer outcomes for future patients.

| 4. PATIENTS AND CARERS HAVE POSITIVE EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES THAT MATTER

Delivering care that truly matters to patients means continuously improving safety, communication, and clinical effectiveness. St Vincent's initiatives in 2025 focused on strengthening early detection, prevention, and patient partnership to reduce harm and enhance recovery.

Venous Thromboembolism (VTE)

In 2024, St Vincent's identified a need for stronger prevention and monitoring of venous thromboembolism (VTE), with rates above the Ministry of Health target. In response, the Network implemented a series of targeted interventions that placed timely data, clinical visibility, and accountability at the forefront.

From April 2024, a forced-function VTE risk assessment was embedded in the medication management system to ensure consistent screening for all inpatients. The Vascular Medicine team reviewed each case to determine whether episodes were hospital-acquired and preventable, providing feedback directly to clinical teams.

Through these changes, clinicians gained real-time access to performance data via the Hospital-Acquired Complications dashboard, enabling earlier identification of trends and prompt corrective action. As a result, VTE rates dropped significantly from 14.3 to 3.2 per 10 000 episodes by the end of FY25. Increased engagement and data transparency have fostered a culture of shared responsibility for prevention, with a planned deep-dive program set to embed these gains even further.

Delirium

Delirium has long been a challenging hospital-acquired complication, particularly in cardiothoracic and orthopaedic cohorts. To address this, St Vincent's formed a dedicated Delirium HAC Recovery Team, uniting clinicians, researchers, and allied health professionals to strengthen early detection, prevention, and management.

Targeted "Delirium Rounding", three times weekly reviews of high-risk patients, provided real-time clinical guidance and education at the bedside. The team also partnered with the pre-admission clinic to introduce the Sunflower Tool, enabling risk assessment and tailored education before hospital entry.

These interventions resulted in a 70% increase in patients reporting that they received delirium-related information and, for the first time in several years, St Vincent's achieved below-benchmark delirium rates – fewer than 35 per 10 000 episodes for Q3 and Q4 FY25. The initiative has built a sustainable, system-wide model for preventing and managing delirium and improving the hospital experience for patients and families alike.

| 5. OUR PEOPLE

The dedication, compassion, and expertise of our staff remain central to St Vincent's success. In 2025, a range of initiatives focused on capability, wellbeing, and inclusion ensured that our people felt supported, safe, and empowered to deliver exceptional care every day.

Capability

Building the capability of our people to lead improvement, deliver safer care, and sustain change, remains a cornerstone of St Vincent's approach to quality and safety. Over the past 2 years, the Improvement Team, in collaboration with the Patient Safety and Quality Team, has delivered a comprehensive and tiered education framework through the Safety and Quality Essentials Pathway (SQEP) and Accelerating Implementation Methodology (AIM) programs.

The SQEP program provides a structured learning pathway that empowers staff at all levels to understand and apply improvement methodology in their daily work, supporting a critical platform to cultivate a culture of continuous improvement across the organisation. More than 650 staff across all departments have now completed the Foundations level training, an engaging, one-hour interactive workshop designed to build awareness of the shared responsibility for safety and quality. Over 90% of participants reported an increase in their understanding of improvement principles and their confidence in applying them locally.

The Intermediate level builds practical skills through a workshop format where participants bring a local problem to solve. Learning is reinforced through coaching, simulation, and self-directed online modules, with more than 125 staff completing this level and 95% reporting positive impacts on their ability to diagnose and implement change.

The Adept level represents the highest tier of the program, a 12-month course focused on leadership, data literacy, and system improvement. Delivered through interactive workshops, coaching, and peer-learning sessions, it equips middle managers with the tools to lead sustainable change and embed safety and quality in everyday practice. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants identifying the modules on facilitation skills, data dashboards, and human factors as particularly valuable. Additionally, the program supports participants in focusing

on an organisation-level priority, supporting the delivery of the organisation's business plan, thus further contributing to improvements across patient safety, quality and access.

Complementing this pathway, the Accelerating Implementation Methodology (AIM) program provides practical tools to manage the human side of change. Now in its fifth year, AIM continues to help leaders and clinicians build readiness, manage resistance, and reinforce successful implementation of local and network-wide projects. More than 230 staff, including external partners, have completed AIM training, strengthening the Network's capability to deliver transformation with both speed and sustainability. Whilst supporting alignment with NSW Health, the program has also delivered overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees – with identification of improved confidence and capability amongst participants in managing resistance, understanding the human factors of change and providing structure to their approach.

Together, these programs have created a strong foundation for continuous improvement across St Vincent's Health Network Sydney – equipping staff with the confidence, knowledge, and shared language to lead safer, more effective care for every patient.

OK STOP

Developed in response to staff feedback, OK STOP is a structured five-step "hot debrief" framework used after critical or high-stress incidents. Introduced in April 2025, it provides teams with a short, supportive opportunity to reflect, learn, and debrief immediately after challenging events.

The model has been particularly well received in high-intensity areas and situations such as the Emergency Department, Mental Health, and in Code Blue responses. Staff have described the experience as "extremely beneficial to all team members" and noted that "the feedback and the outcome was excellent." These reflections highlight how the tool is helping to normalise open discussion, reduce stress, and build shared learning in real time.

The success of OK STOP at St Vincent's has led to growing interest from other facilities within the SVHA group, with plans underway to expand its use across the Network as a standard post-incident support model.



Staff Survey Engagement

In 2025, St Vincent's Health Network Sydney achieved a strong response to its annual Staff Engagement Survey, with participation rising to 47 per cent, a six per cent increase from the previous year. The survey provided valuable insights into how staff experience their work environment, leadership, and culture, reinforcing the organisation's commitment to listening, learning, and improving together.

Results highlighted significant strengths across the workforce. Staff expressed a deep pride in working for St Vincent's, with 82 per cent proud to tell others they work here. Confidence in the quality and safety of care was reflected in 83 per cent of staff reporting they would feel safe being treated as a patient themselves, a five per cent improvement on 2024 results.

Responses also affirmed the strength of St Vincent's workplace culture, with 90 per cent of staff agreeing that their colleagues treat all patients with respect, and 84 per cent feeling their skills are well utilised in their roles. Eighty-four per cent of staff also reported that their supervisor or manager cares about their safety, while 89 per cent felt that the work they do makes a real difference. These results reflect an engaged, values-driven workforce that are brought together by compassion, teamwork, and professional excellence, supported by visible and responsive leadership.

Looking ahead, the insights gained from the 2025 survey will continue to guide St Vincent's in strengthening engagement,

expanding development pathways, and enhancing wellbeing initiatives. The organisation remains focused on ensuring that every person who works at St Vincent's feels safe, valued, and proud to contribute to delivering exceptional care every day.

Anti-Racism Policy

St Vincent's commitment to equity and inclusion was further strengthened through the launch of its Anti-Racism Policy in 2025. Developed collaboratively with the Senior Leadership Team, Aboriginal Health Unit, and community partners, the policy sets clear expectations for respectful conduct and accountability.

Education sessions led by the Executive Director of Aboriginal Health, supported by People & Culture, helped staff recognise and address both direct and indirect racism in the workplace and community.

Early evaluation shows an increase in staff awareness, confidence, and responsiveness in identifying and addressing racist behaviour. This policy represents an important step toward ensuring that every person, staff, patient, carer, family and visitor, feels safe, respected, and valued within the St Vincent's community.





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St Vincent's Health Network Sydney

Sexuality and Gender Diversity

St Vincent's Health Network Sydney remains deeply committed to ensuring that care is inclusive, safe, and responsive to the needs of sexuality and gender diverse (LGBTQ+) patients. Data at both state and national levels show that LGBTQ+ people often experience poorer health outcomes and face barriers to equitable healthcare. In response, St Vincent's has implemented a suite of initiatives to create a more inclusive and affirming care environment for all patients, staff, and visitors.

Guided by the leadership of the Sexuality and Gender Diversity Programs Lead, the Network has developed and implemented a range of initiatives to strengthen inclusive practice and cultural safety. These included the creation of a new LGBTQ+ staff training module and a co-designed Trans Inclusive Practice education package, developed in partnership with 11 trans and gender diverse consumers, staff, and external stakeholders. The program includes a three-part education series, a one-hour session, and an on-demand 20-minute module, giving staff flexible and practical opportunities to build understanding and confidence in delivering inclusive care.

Complementing these education initiatives, practical tools were developed to support inclusive practice, such as the "Quick Guide to Trans Inclusive Practice" and "Pronouns Quick Guide." Patient registration forms and policies were reviewed and updated to reflect best practice, with 11 forms now aligned to national standards for trans and gender diverse inclusion. The Patient

Administration System was also enhanced to include the gender-neutral title "Mx," ensuring patients can be addressed respectfully in accordance with their identity.

Visibility and awareness has been strengthened across the Network through initiatives such as Pride lanyards and ally badges, the SVHNS float in the 2025 Sydney Mardi Gras, and a Pride exhibition in the hospital mezzanine. Updated signage and the replacement of the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights with an LGBTQ+ version further demonstrate the Network's commitment to inclusive care.

These efforts have resulted in tangible outcomes. Over 160 staff across 21 departments have completed LGBTQ+ and Trans Inclusive Practice training, with participants reporting increased understanding, reflective practice, and practical takeaways for safer interactions with patients. St Vincent's training modules and resources have also been shared with the NSW Ministry of Health, HETI, several Local Health Districts, and St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne, extending the program's reach and impact beyond the Network.

| 6. HEALTH SYSTEM IS MANAGED SUSTAINABLY

Sustainability in healthcare means designing systems that are efficient, reliable, and enable staff to focus on what matters most, patient care. In 2025, St Vincent's delivered one of its most significant system-improvement projects to date, transforming hospital supply chain operations through the DeliverEASE program.

DeliverEASE

Implemented across 48 clinical areas in early 2025, DeliverEASE is a major project under the NSW Health Procurement Reform Program, designed to modernise the medical consumables supply chain. The initiative reimagined how supplies are ordered, stored, and distributed, improving efficiency and freeing up clinical time for patient care.

Through detailed consultation with staff, the project team reorganised storerooms, implemented cycle-counting, introduced inventory dashboards, and trained staff in modernised supply workflows. These improvements have already delivered measurable results:

- **Increased stock visibility:** Cycle-counting provides real-time data displayed on an inventory dashboard, helping Nurse Unit Managers monitor supplies. St Vincent's achieved a 74% cycle-count compliance rate, ranking fourth in NSW.
- **Reduced waste:** Better visibility and ordering practices cut overstocking, reducing items with more than 60 days' cover from 36% in July to 23% in September 2025.

- **More clinical time for patients:** Dock staff now complete the majority of imprest ordering, enabling clinicians to spend more time at the bedside.
- **Standardised layout:** Reorganised storerooms mean staff can easily locate supplies, improving workflow and safety, particularly in high-pressure clinical situations.

DeliverEASE has set the foundation for future digital transformation of hospital logistics, creating a more sustainable, efficient system that supports both staff and patients.

| 7. RESEARCH

Research and innovation are at the heart of St Vincent's mission to deliver cutting-edge, evidence-based care. In 2025, the Network continued to lead nationally and internationally in clinical trials, ensuring that patients have access to new therapies and emerging treatments closer to home.

Clinical Trials

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care's National Clinical Trials Governance Framework (NCTGF) has been successfully embedded across St Vincent's, ensuring that research activity is governed with the same rigour as clinical care. During accreditation in August 2024, St Vincent's achieved a 3/3 "mature systems" rating, reflecting excellence in governance, consumer partnership, and research integrity.

The year also saw significant milestones across multiple trials:

- **IGNX ACCELERATE Peanut Phase 1 Clinical Trial:** A first-in-human study testing a pioneering treatment for peanut allergy in adults, aiming to reduce the risk of anaphylaxis and improve quality of life. St Vincent's recruited the world's first participant, marking a defining event for allergy research in Australia.
- **Romosozumab Multiple Myeloma Study:** Establishment of a clinical trial satellite site at Griffith Base Hospital extended access to novel therapies for regional NSW patients. This partnership between Griffith and St Vincent's haematology teams allowed patients to participate in cutting-edge trials without leaving their community.
- Ongoing collaboration between researchers, clinicians, and the Research Office has streamlined trial activation processes, improving access to new treatments and ensuring that research outcomes translate into improved patient care.

These achievements highlight St Vincent's growing impact as a leader in clinical innovation, translating research into real-world improvements for patients and communities across NSW and beyond.

Theranostics

St Vincent's continued to lead in nuclear medicine and precision oncology. Three landmark trials advanced the field in 2025:

- **ENZAp Trial:** St Vincent's served as principal investigator and lead recruiter, securing a \$4 million grant and publishing multiple papers in *Lancet Oncology* and *Nature Oncology*.
- **PRIMARY2 Trial:** A national PSMA PET imaging study co-led with Peter MacCallum recruited 300 of 660 participants through St Vincent's.
- **OPTIMAL-PSMA Trial:** A world-first randomised Phase II study on dose intensification for metastatic prostate cancer, expanding regional access and shaping a forthcoming Phase III trial.

Together, these trials illustrate St Vincent's leadership in translational research, providing patients with early access to life-changing therapies and defining global standards in theragnostic care.



| 8. FUTURE FOCUS

As St Vincent's Health Network Sydney looks ahead, its focus remains on sustaining excellence while investing in innovation that strengthens safety, efficiency and patient experience. Key projects of the future will build on the foundations established in 2025, driving digital transformation, clinical standardisation and improved access to care.

Aboriginal Health Outcomes

Improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients remains a key quality and safety priority for St Vincent's Health Network Sydney. Across 2025, performance continued to trend positively, particularly in discharged against medical advice (DAMA) and unplanned readmission rates, which both improved against targets. While there has also been progress in reducing Did Not Wait (DNW) and Left at Own Risk presentations through the Emergency Department, these indicators remain below target and continue to be a focus for action and improvement.

These outcomes reflect the impact of targeted strategies, including expansion of the Flexi Clinic, enhanced recruitment and retention within the Aboriginal Health Unit, and an ongoing emphasis on cultural competence training for clinical and non-clinical staff. Together, these initiatives have strengthened trust, engagement, and continuity of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients presenting to St Vincent's.

Looking forward, St Vincent's will build on this momentum through a focused program of work centred on five key areas:

- Employment pathways that increase Aboriginal representation and leadership across the workforce,
- Cultural safety, ensuring all care environments are welcoming, respectful, and responsive,
- Service improvement initiatives, informed by health-equity data to target gaps in care,

- Partnerships with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and external agencies to support integrated models of care and referral pathways,
- Research that amplifies Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and drives evidence-based practice.

Through these priorities, St Vincent's aims to strengthen equity, safety, and quality outcomes, ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients experience care that is culturally safe, person-centred, and delivered with compassion and respect.

Mental Health Outcomes

Improving outcomes and experiences for consumers accessing mental health services remains a key quality and safety priority for St Vincent's Health Network Sydney. Across 2025, performance in key indicators has fluctuated, highlighting both progress and ongoing challenges in managing complex patient presentations and demand pressures.

Absent Without Leave (AWOL) rates varied throughout the year, with periods of improvement that were not consistently sustained. The Emergency Department Mental Health Collaborative continues to play a pivotal role in driving improvement, focusing on patient flow, safety, and proactive risk mitigation. This includes enhanced staff training, structured interventions, and prioritised review processes to recognise and respond to behaviours of concern more effectively. These efforts are strengthening situational awareness and promoting safer, more coordinated care for patients presenting in distress.

Performance against the Emergency Department Length of Stay (LOS < 12 hours) target remains a challenge, reflecting increased demand, workforce constraints, and growing complexity of patient needs. Despite these pressures, the Mental Health Service is implementing a series of targeted improvement strategies. This includes the remodelling of community mental health services to enhance early intervention and post-discharge follow-up, as well as expanded use of the Patient Flow Portal to improve visibility of capacity and streamline admission and transfer processes.

While opportunities for improvement remain, these initiatives demonstrate a clear commitment to patient safety, continuity of care, and system efficiency. The focus for the coming year will be on embedding these improvements, monitoring outcomes, and continuing to evolve models of care that support timely, compassionate, and high-quality mental health care for every consumer.

Care Pathways: Safe and Quality Care with Patient Activation

The Care Pathways Project represents a major next step in St Vincent's commitment to delivering safe, efficient and patient-centred care. Building on the success of previous digital innovations in surgical patient journeys, this program is developing standardised, evidence-based care pathways for both planned and unplanned admissions.

The project aims to improve patient experience, clinical outcomes and system efficiency through co-designed pathways that integrate accessible, digital tools, patient education materials and staff training resources.

These pathways will enhance patient safety and shared decision-making, reduce hospital-acquired complications and readmissions, and improve communication and teamwork among multidisciplinary teams. Digital integration will allow patients to receive timely, personalised information throughout their journey, from pre-admission to discharge, while enabling staff to monitor outcomes in real time.

With strong leadership and collaboration across the organisation, the Care Pathways project lays the foundation for a new model of connected, data-driven care. It reflects St Vincent's vision for the future, where streamlined systems, consistent standards and empowered patients come together to deliver better outcomes and experiences for all.

Non-Admitted Service (NAS) Redesign Project

The Non-Admitted Service (NAS) Redesign Project is a key initiative shaping the future of outpatient and ambulatory care at St Vincent's Health Network Sydney. Focused on improving access, safety, and quality, the project will establish a streamlined, digitally enabled service that ensures timely and equitable care for patients, supported by sustainable structures and clear governance.

Through redesigning referral, waitlist, appointment, and discharge processes, the project will enhance visibility and accountability across the entire patient journey. Improved systems integration and transparent data capture will strengthen clinical oversight, support accurate billing and activity tracking, and enable safer, more coordinated care transitions.

A centralised NAS Dashboard will provide real-time performance insights, allowing teams to monitor demand, efficiency, and outcomes while responding proactively to emerging risks. The redesign will also align outpatient workflows with the Single Digital Patient Record, supporting safer information sharing and a more

seamless experience for patients and clinicians alike.

Six core workstreams, including governance, referral management, appointment management, waitlist management, discharge and transfer of care, and performance reporting, underpin the program's delivery. Each will ensure consistency, reliability, and a focus on continuous improvement across outpatient hubs.

By uniting digital innovation with strong governance and a shared commitment to quality and safety, the NAS Redesign Project will create a cohesive, patient-centred model of non-admitted care. This transformation will improve equity of access, strengthen system efficiency, and enhance the overall safety and quality of care across the Network.

Enhancing Emergency Access

In line with the NSW Health Hospital Access Targets (HATs) introduced to improve emergency department performance and patient flow, St Vincent's Health Network Sydney has prioritised work on the admitted HATs, which focus on ensuring patients requiring admission or transfer receive timely and coordinated care. These state-wide targets aim for 80 percent of admitted patients to have an emergency department length of stay (LOS) of 6 hours or less, and 95 percent to be seen, treated or admitted within 12 hours.

For St Vincent's, this focus extends beyond the Emergency Department, driving improvement efforts across inpatient units and clinical streams to enhance patient flow, reduce bottlenecks, and strengthen safety during the transition from emergency to ward-based care. Work underway includes refining escalation processes, improving communication between departments, and optimising bed management strategies.

By embedding these principles throughout the organisation, St Vincent's continues to strengthen its capacity to deliver timely, safe and person-centred care, ensuring that every patient moves through the system efficiently and receives the right care, in the right place, at the right time.