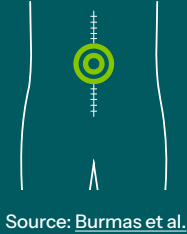


# Emergency laparotomy care in Australia

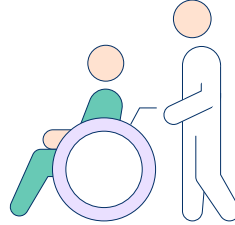
Emergency laparotomy is one of the highest-risk surgical procedures for time-critical abdominal conditions like a bowel obstruction, perforation or serious internal bleeding. The **Emergency Laparotomy Clinical Care Standard** will improve patient outcomes and quality of care.

## NATIONAL DATA

Each year more than  
**15k**  
people have an emergency laparotomy



More than **half of patients are aged over 65** and many are frail\*



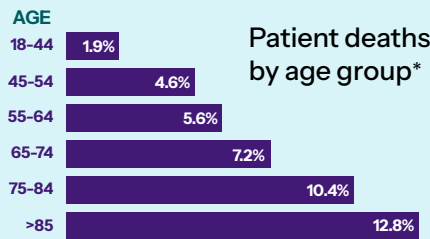
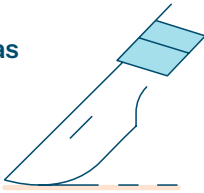
Emergency laparotomies cost Australian hospitals  
**\$400 million pa**

Source: Burmas et al.

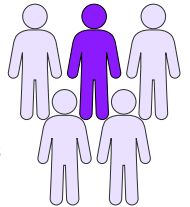


## HEALTH IMPACT

Mortality rate in Australia was almost  
**7%**  
overall\*

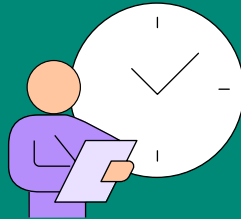


More than  
**1 in 5**  
patients have sepsis on presentation\*

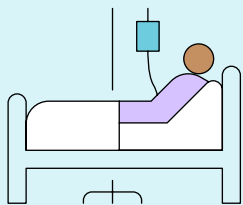
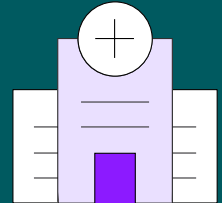


## HOSPITAL CARE, 2022–2024

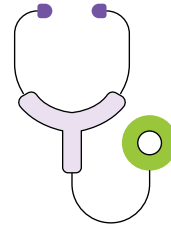
Only  
**59%**  
of patients had surgery within the recommended timeframe\*



Average length of hospital stay almost  
**13 days**  
(excluding stays > 60 days)\*



After surgery only  
**2 in 3**  
high-risk patients went to ICU\*



After surgery only  
**22%**  
of older patients were assessed by a geriatrician\*

## 4 KEY ELEMENTS TO IMPROVE CLINICAL CARE

### 1 Rapidly assess and expedite care

- Identify time-critical patients
- Consider sepsis
- Prioritise surgical review
- Ensure timely access to surgery

### 2 Identify high-risk patients

- Assess risk and frailty preoperatively
- For high-risk patients:
  - ensure consultant surgeon and consultant anaesthetist are in theatre
  - consult on postoperative critical care needs

### 3 Discuss risks and goals of care

- Consider benefits, risks and likely outcomes
- Understand the patient's goals of care
- Involve senior doctors in shared decision making when surgery may not be beneficial

### 4 Involve physicians for older people

- Involve geriatricians or other physicians skilled in perioperative care of older people
- Collaboratively manage older patients as needed