

Patient experience data raises questions about private equity's role in Australia's health

28 August 2025, Melbourne, Australia: The Australian Health Service Alliance (AHSA) has urged those in the driver's seat of the Healthscope sale to pay close attention to the past experiences of patients and the role of private equity in our healthcare system.

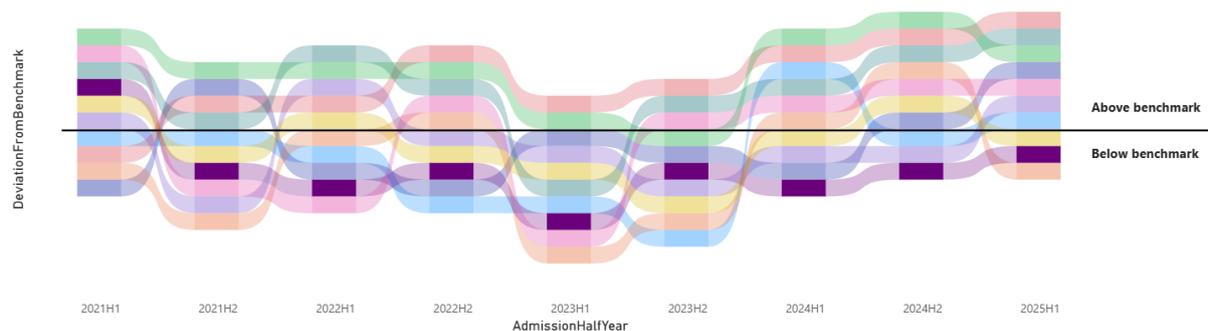
AHSA today released Healthscope performance data from the Voice of the Patient, as compared to its peers, while under Brookfield private equity ownership. The data has been extracted to show how patients viewed their experiences and care at Healthscope, to demonstrate the potential impact of private equity on our critical health services and highlight where the new owners – with industry's support – can drive better care.

The Voice of the Patient is Australia's largest independent patient experience and outcomes measurement program in the private health sector. It captures real-time insights across hundreds of hospitals, measuring the quality of care from the patient's perspective — not just what care was delivered, but how it was experienced. It assesses patient-reported data metrics related to risk factors, social determinants of healthcare, patient sentiments as well as Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMs¹) and Patient Reported Outcomes Measures (PROMs²).

Over the past 5 years, almost 100,000 patients across Australia have reported their experiences and outcomes to the Voice of the Patient after their private hospital admission.

Figure 1 illustrates Healthscope's performance over time across their overnight hospitals using data from the combined responses of over 10,000 patients at Healthscope hospitals. It shows that Healthscope, pictured in the dark purple, consistently ranks as a bottom-tier performer across nearly all periods of measurement within the Voice of the Patient.

Figure 1. Healthscope PREM Performance Deviation Over Time vs Peers



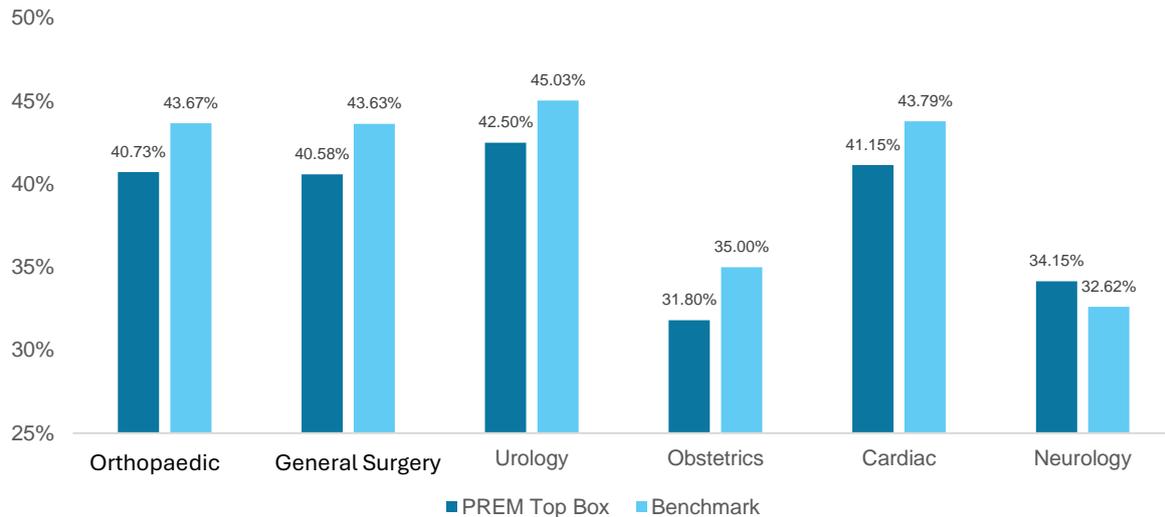
The benchmark line in Figure 1 represents the overall average from the performance across all facilities and all collected data points from the start of 2021 to the end of June 2025. The coloured flows show the deviation of each group from the benchmark. Each node reflects the aggregated group-level performance for a given half-year.

¹ PREMs (Patient-Reported Experience Measures) are collected through standardised measurement instruments that capture patients' perspectives on their experience of care, including communication, respect, and involvement in decisions.

² PROMs (Patient-Reported Outcome Measures) are based on validated measurement instruments that record patients' self-reported health outcomes such as pain, function, and wellbeing after receiving care.

Healthscope’s underperformance is evident not only when comparing them to other groups across all procedures, but also at each underlying clinical category. Figure 2 demonstrates that Healthscope also lagged peers in clinical categories such as orthopaedic, general surgery, urology, obstetrics and cardiac, using data collected from December 2020 to June 2025.

Figure 2. Healthscope PREM Performance (top box) by category vs Peer Benchmark



Andrew Sando, CEO of AHSa, said: “The future owners of Healthscope’s business have an incredibly important job on their hands. The decision of who owns these hospitals cannot solely depend on who’s willing to pay the most. It must also reflect honestly on whether they are going to play a positive role in the Australian healthcare system.

“For stakeholders across Australia’s health system – providers, payers and patients – this sale must be an opportunity to improve patient experience, optimise outcomes, enhance quality and embrace innovative funding models. This is a crucial juncture for our health system. The final decision of who takes control of these private hospitals must consider who is best placed to manage them and deliver the care Australians expect and deserve.”

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Voice of the Patient Methodology and Additional Information

Voice of the Patient is an AHSA and Insight Actuaries initiative.

Hospital performance is measured using a Top Box scoring approach, which identifies the proportion of patients selecting the most positive response option (e.g. “Always” or “Strongly Agree”) for each experience measure.

An overall performance score is then calculated by aggregating all Top Box responses across the full set of questions into a single composite metric. This method focuses on capturing excellence—rather than adequacy—by highlighting the highest standard of care as reported by patients.

Top Box scoring is widely used in patient experience research and quality frameworks.

Comparisons and benchmarks are derived through risk-adjusted comparisons across similar hospitals and clinical categories, ensuring that each facility’s results are fairly evaluated in the context of their case mix and service complexity. This framework ensures hospitals are assessed not simply on raw scores, but in relation to the expectations for their peer group, allowing meaningful insights into performance variation and opportunities for improvement.

The [Why Measurement Matters](#) report from AHSA highlights the critical role of patient-reported experience measures (PREMs) in revealing meaningful variation in hospital performance.

About AHSA

[The Australian Health Service Alliance \(AHSA\)](#) is a large, member-owned, not-for-profit service organisation. We serve small to medium not-for-profit and member owned health funds to achieve the shared goal of a quality, sustainable private health insurance industry for their members. The AHSA facilitates arrangements with healthcare providers on behalf of our funds. As a large service provider and negotiating group, our funds benefit from our collective size to achieve successful outcomes for members. Negotiation of competitive, patient-focused contracts brings value to fund members and contributes to the viability of Australia's healthcare industry. AHSA exists for our funds and our funds exist for their members. Together, we strive for high quality private healthcare at an affordable price.