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Page 1 of 1

 [back](#)

EDs 'wasting millions' by rushing to insert cannulas

THE national healthcare system could save more than \$13 million a year and stop the risk of patients contracting blood infections if emergency departments stopped rushing to insert cannulas.

Researchers at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital found 30 per cent of patients in their ED did not require a cannula, and after a three-month trial, the number inserted has been reduced to every three in 10 patients.

RBWH Emergency and

Trauma Centre senior staff specialist Professor Louise Cullen said in most cases, cannulas were put in too quickly.

"They're great to easily give patients fluids and medications or have blood taken, but they aren't always needed," she said.

In response to the research, the education program CREDIT was developed. If rolled out nationally, it could save more than \$13.7 million a year. The average cost of inserting a cannula at RBWH is \$22.80.

