

The Access to and affordability of medical specialists in Australia.
To the honourable members,

I put forward the following proposal to improve access and
affordability of medical specialists.

When Medicare allocates provider numbers to doctors and specialists,
there should be regional quotas implemented based on population
numbers.

This will ensure doctors are spread out over all regions and any
doctor who does not have a provider number will have to charge their
patients full price or move to a region that is deficient in its
quota.

Only those doctors and specialists within the quota can bulk bill or
perhaps allow a small surcharge based on their staffing requirements
and cost of renting their facility. Also any doctor charging
excessively over the Medicare rebate without justification will lose
their provider number.

The provider numbers are not transferable and lapse if a certain
minimum number of hours are not worked.

There should be provision to add one locum to the provider number,
(to cover holiday and out of hours consults) as long as both are
not working concurrently.

As provider numbers become available to to increased population
numbers in a region or retirement of existing practitioners
consideration may be given to compassionate transfers from other
regions before enlisting new practitioners.

This proposal should help to ensure fair distribution of medical
practitioners and help to cap the health cost burden to the
government.