

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 & 30 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000779

OUTCOME: 4 - Individual Health Benefits

Topic: Bulk Billing

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Watt, Murray

Question:

What percentage of patients are bulk billed for all GP services - broken down to each state and territory? Please provide the most current data.

Answer:

The Department of Health does not routinely compile statistics on patient bulk billing distributions at a state and territory level.

The Department compiles statistics on patient bulk billing distributions at a national level on a financial year basis. The most current data is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Bulk-billing patterns for patients who received at least one Non-Referred Attendance, 2015-16

Financial Year	Bulk-billing rate for NRA services	Patient count (2)	Percentage of patients for the year	Percentage of NRA services for the year	Average Bulk Billing Rate
2015-16	0 %	2,260,220	10.8%	4.3%	0.0%
	1% - 9%	33,946	0.2%	0.4%	7.2%
	10% - 19%	277,514	1.3%	1.6%	14.5%
	20% - 29%	573,715	2.7%	2.6%	24.0%
	30% - 39%	562,896	2.7%	2.3%	34.0%
	40% - 49%	314,586	1.5%	1.8%	42.6%
	50% - 59%	967,453	4.6%	3.3%	52.2%
	60% - 69%	706,909	3.4%	3.1%	64.4%
	70% - 79%	503,376	2.4%	2.8%	74.5%
	80% - 89%	759,506	3.6%	4.8%	84.6%
	90% - 99%	399,819	1.9%	4.9%	93.6%
	100 %	13,516,412	64.7%	68.2%	100.0%
Total	20,876,352	100.0%	100.0%	85.1%	

Notes:

(1) NRA = Broad Types of Service - VR GP, Other and Enhanced Primary Care Non-Referred Attendances

(2) Patients have only been counted if they claimed at least one NRA service in the reference period and have a non-negative number of Bulk-billed NRA services (zero permitted).

The Department routinely compiles and publishes bulk billing statistics based on services. A full time series (1984 to the present) of bulk billing statistics are available nationally, by state and territory and remoteness area. The bulk billing rates for each geographical level is available by quarter, year-to-date and financial year on the Department's website at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/Medicare+Statistics-1>

The latest bulk billing statistics by state are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Bulk-billing rate GP Non-Referred Attendance, (Excluding Practice Nurse Items)

	2016-17 YTD Jul-Mar
NSW	88.6
VIC	85.0
QLD	85.1
SA	84.5
WA	81.9
TAS	76.0
NT	88.7
ACT	60.9
Australia	85.4

Source:

Quarterly Medicare Statistics, 1.4a Bulk Billing State YTD