



The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care

MEDIA RELEASE

6 June 2021

GP bulk billing services at record highs

More Australians than ever are getting the medical care they need at no cost to themselves, with almost nine out of 10 visits to the GP in the nine months to March 2021 provided with no out-of-pocket cost to the patient.

GP bulk billing rates reached an all-time high of 88.7 per cent for the period from July 2020 to March 2021. This is three percentage points higher than the same period last year (85.7 per cent) and 6.7 percentage points higher than the same period in 2012-13 (82.0 per cent).

The Australian Government's rapid and effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic is reflected in today's record-breaking figures.

Across all Medicare services, the bulk billing rate reached 80.9 per cent, an increase of 4.4 percentage points since 2012-13.

Telehealth changes to Medicare introduced for the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to high bulk billing, while also reducing the risk of spreading the disease in the community.

In the nine months to March 2021, Medicare paid benefits for 2.5 million COVID-19 video consultations and 34.1 million COVID-19 phone consultations provided by GPs, specialists and allied health professionals.

The temporary telehealth items represented 24.8 per cent of GP consultations and 10.7 per cent of all Medicare services over the same period. In total, 30.2 million GP consultations were provided via phone and 630,394 million via video.

As part of the 2021-22 Budget, the Government committed more than \$65 million from 1 January 2022 to boost bulk billing rebates and provide more affordable healthcare for patients in regional, rural and remote areas.

Our Government's commitment to Medicare and bulk billing remains rock solid. These figures show that we are supporting the health and wellbeing of Australians more than ever before.

-ENDS-