



## **The Hon. Greg Hunt MP**

Minister for Health

Minister for Sport

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

23 February 2017

#### **Record results for bulk-billing shows Medicare is stronger than ever**

Australian patients are getting more benefit from Medicare than ever before with GP bulk billing rates jumping to 85.4 per cent during the second half of 2016 – up from 84.7 per cent for the same period in 2015.

This is the highest figure ever for the July to December period.

Patients had 73.5 million GP general attendance services in the second half of 2016 (up from 72.1 million for the same period in 2015).

This means that more Australians are visiting the doctor without having to reach for the wallet.

The total cost of Medicare benefits was more than \$10.85 billion in the second half of 2016 – up from \$10.55 billion.

The Turnbull Government has a rock solid commitment to Medicare and funding is increasing by around \$1 billion every year.

The figures released today by the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services show that Medicare is stronger than ever.

The overall number of medical services subsidised by Medicare during the second half of 2016 was also a record at 192.7 million. This was 1.7 million higher than in the second half of 2015.

The bulk billing rate for total Medicare services remains at 77.8 per cent. That is because the bulk billing rate for in-hospital pathology services has dropped slightly because it is increasingly being claimed on private health insurance.

Universal access to medical services, public hospitals and medicines through Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme is something that Australians hold dear.

Our health system is the envy of many countries around the world.

The Turnbull Government has a rock solid commitment to Medicare and to bulk billing, and our national long term health plan will ensure that Australians will have the best health system in the world, long into the future.

(ENDS)