



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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Highest bulk-billing rate on record

New Medicare data shows a record amount of Australian patients are seeing their doctor without paying a cent, with the bulk-billing rate increasing to 85.8 per cent in the first half of the 2017–18 financial year.

This is the highest GP bulk-billing rate on record for the July to December period and it is nearly 4% higher than Labor’s 81.9 per cent, which they achieved when they were last in Government.

More than 65.9 million bulk billed GP visits were provided to patients over this time period, an extra 3.1 million services compared to last year.

The total cost of all Medicare services during the six month period was \$11.6 billion, with the bulk-billing rate for all services increasing in every state and territory.

These figures put to bed the shocking lies that Labor continues to peddle about Medicare.

Medicare has never been stronger.

And we’re investing more than ever – with record Medicare funding increasing each and every year from \$23 billion in 2017-18, to \$24 billion, to \$26 billion to \$28 billion in 2020-21.

Spending under Labor was \$19.5 billion in 2012-13.

And although more Australians are benefiting from these record bulk-billing figures than ever before, we must continue to drive down the cost of private health insurance and address out-of-pocket costs.

That’s why the Turnbull Government will work with the medical profession to address the large and sometimes unanticipated out-of-pocket medical fees some patients face.

A new expert committee chaired by the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer, Professor Brendan Murphy, will investigate out-of-pocket costs and options to ensure that consumers are better informed of fees before agreeing to treatment.

Our commitment to Medicare is rock solid and the figures released today show that under the Turnbull Government, Medicare is providing more support to Australian patients than ever before.

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