



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP**  
**Minister for Health and Ageing**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Medicare bulk billing: September quarter 2008**

In this year's September quarter, Medicare Australia processed 73.4 million services – involving the payment of benefits totalling \$3.5 billion. This represented about 3.4 services and about \$166 in benefits for every Australian.

In the September quarter 2008, 73.2 per cent of all Medicare services were bulk billed.

This is down 0.7 of a percentage point on this year's June quarter, but is up 0.7 of a percentage point on the September quarter of 2007.

78.6 per cent of all non-referred (GP) attendances were bulk billed. This was 0.5 of a percentage point lower than this year's June quarter - but was up 0.6 of a percentage point on the September quarter of 2007.

Bulk billing for GP attendances in this year's September quarter, compared with the September quarter 2007, show:

- NSW up 0.8 of a percentage point to 84.5 per cent
- Victoria up 0.3 of a percentage point to 76.2 per cent
- Queensland up 1.0 percentage point to 76.7 per cent
- South Australia up 1.1 percentage point to 78.4 per cent
- Western Australia down 0.6 of a percentage point to 71.8 per cent
- Tasmania up 0.4 of a percentage point to 72.8 per cent
- Northern Territory down 0.9 of a percentage point to 61.3 per cent
- ACT down 0.7 of a percentage point to 49.9 per cent.

Bulk billing for GP attendances in the September quarter 2008, compared with the June quarter 2008, show:

- NSW unchanged at 84.5 per cent

- Victoria down 0.7 of a percentage point to 76.2 per cent
- Queensland down 0.6 of a percentage point to 76.7 per cent
- South Australia down 0.7 of a percentage point to 78.4 per cent
- Western Australia down 1.6 percentage points to 71.8 per cent
- Tasmania down 1.1 percentage points to 72.8 per cent
- Northern Territory down 2.6 percentage points to 61.3 per cent
- ACT down 1.5 percentage points to 49.9 per cent.

In the 12 months ending September 2008, Medicare Australia processed claims for 281.5 million services involving benefits of \$13.3 billion.

To improve access to GP services, the Rudd Government last week announced an increase in GP training places.

The Government has also begun a review of the Medicare Benefits Schedule primary care items to help simplify the schedule, reduce red tape for doctors, and ensure more support is given to preventative health.

The review is being carried out alongside development of a National Primary Health Care Strategy. This will help to better satisfy patients' needs, deliver better health outcomes and make efficient use of the nation's health resources.

Full details of the statistics are at [www.health.gov.au/medicarestats](http://www.health.gov.au/medicarestats)

**For all media inquiries please contact the Minister's office – 02 6277 7220**