



THE HON GREG HUNT MP

Minister for Health

THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts
Federal Member for Bradfield

MEDIA RELEASE

07 September 2020

Record Medicare bulk billing rates through COVID-19

The Morrison Government's steadfast commitment to Medicare has been underlined by a record GP bulk billing rate of 87.5 per cent for 2019–20.

The bulk billing rate in Bradfield was 67.8 per cent, meaning on average more than 6 out of 10 visits to the GP were provided with no out-of-pocket cost.

“This is just another example of the Morrison Government's commitment to Medicare and bulk billing in Bradfield and across Australia,” said Member for Bradfield, Paul Fletcher.

In total, Medicare services increased to 428.3 million with total benefits reaching \$24.7 billion.

To ensure Australians have access to the healthcare services they need through the COVID-19 pandemic, temporary Medicare telehealth services have been introduced and widely taken up by the community.

In the period from 13 March to 30 June 2020 there were:

- 16 million COVID-19 phone consultations to GPs, specialists and allied health professionals.
- 1.4 million COVID-19 video consultations to GPs, specialists and allied health professionals.

For the 2019–20 financial year, temporary telehealth items represented 8.8 per cent of GP consultations and 4.1 per cent of all Medicare services.

“The temporary telehealth items have played a critical role in the Government's response to COVID-19,” said Mr Fletcher.

“These measures have allowed patients in Bradfield to access essential health care while minimising the risk of community transmission of the virus.”

Bulk billing incentive payments have been temporarily doubled to support sustainable practice, while the types of services eligible for the incentive payments have been expanded.

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt said the Government had also required telehealth services to vulnerable Australians to be bulk billed.

“These measures have reduced the barriers to timely health care for thousands of Australians,” Minister Hunt said.

“Our rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic has meant better protection for patients and healthcare providers, and ensured continuity of access to affordable care.”

The Morrison 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

Minister Fletcher’s office: Luke Bulbrook - 0405 295 442