

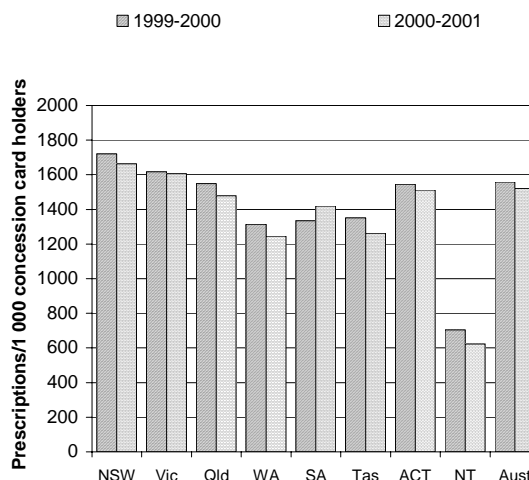
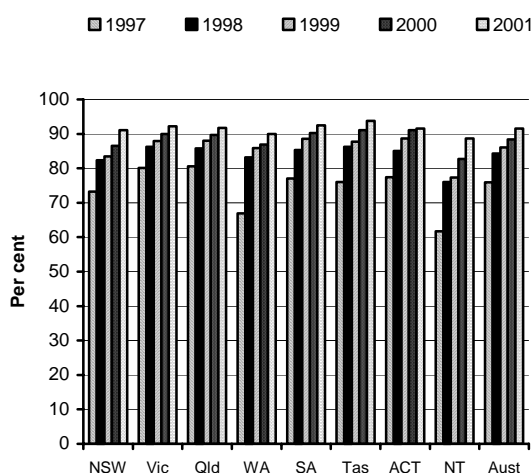
GENERAL PRACTICE (CHAPTER 6)

- General practitioners are central to patient management in the health care system and support to general practice is an important part of government strategy to improve health outcomes in Australia.
- In 2000-01 there were 24 249 vocationally registered GPs and other medical practitioners billing Medicare in Australia. (p. 254). This translates to 16 479 fulltime workload equivalent¹ GPs in 2000-01.
- Commonwealth Government expenditure on GP services was around \$2.9 billion in 2000-01, or about \$149 per person in Australia. (p.252).

Selection of results

Proportion of children aged 12 to 15 months who were fully immunised (per cent) ^{a, b, c} (p. 264)

Prescription rates for oral antibiotics useable for upper respiratory tract infections ^d (p. 277)



See over for data and footnotes.

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- GPs played a major role in immunising children under seven in all jurisdictions except the ACT and the NT. 91.5 per cent of all children aged 12 to 15 months in June 2001 were fully immunised. Tasmania had the highest proportion fully immunised (93.8 per cent) (p. 263).
- A new indicator is included this year – ‘Management of upper respiratory tract infections’. Antibiotics have no efficacy in the treatment of viral infections but are still frequently prescribed when they occur. Consequently, their prescription rates (overall, and particularly in relation to upper respiratory tract infections) are unambiguously too high. Reductions in the rate of prescription of those oral antibiotics most commonly used when patients present with upper respiratory tract infections are an indicator of more appropriate treatment being offered by GPs. Prescriptions per 1000 persons with PBS concession cards for 2000-01 were highest in NSW (1663) and lowest in the NT (623) (table 6A.17). The number of prescriptions decreased in all jurisdictions between 1999-2000 and 2000-01 (p. 277).

¹ ‘Full time workload equivalents’ (FWE's) are calculated for each practitioner by dividing the practitioner's Medicare billing by the mean billing of full-time practitioners for that reference period. For example, an FWE value of 2 indicates that the practitioner's total billing is twice that of the mean billing of a full-time practitioner.

- A new indicator – ‘Management of diabetes’ is also included for the first time.

Data for charts on previous page

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
a, b, c									
<i>Proportion of children aged 12 to 15 months who were fully immunised (per cent)</i>									
30 June 1997	73.2	80.1	80.6	66.9	77.0	76.0	77.4	61.7	75.9
30 June 1998	82.3	86.2	85.8	83.2	85.3	86.2	85.0	76.0	84.3
30 June 1999	83.5	87.9	88.0	85.9	88.6	87.7	88.7	77.3	86.1
30 June 2000	86.5	90.0	89.7	86.9	90.2	91.1	91.1	82.7	88.4
30 June 2001	91.1	92.2	91.7	90.0	92.5	93.8	91.5	88.7	91.5
d									
<i>Number of prescriptions for oral antibiotics most commonly used in the treatment of upper respiratory tract infections ordered by GPs and dispensed to patients, per 1000 persons with Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme concession cards)</i>									
1999-2000	1 721	1 617	1 550	1 314	1 335	1 351	1 546	704	1 558
2000-01	1 663	1 607	1 479	1 245	1 420	1 263	1 511	623	1 521

^a Coverage measured at 30 June for children turning 12 months of age by 31 March. ^b The Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) includes all children under seven years of age who are registered with Medicare. By the age of 12 months, over 98 per cent of Australian children have been registered with Medicare (NCIRS 2000). ^c There may be some under-reporting by providers, and as a result, vaccine coverage estimates calculated using ACIR data should be considered minimum estimates (NCIRS 2000). ^d Prescriptions rates are recorded per 1000 persons with PBS concession cards as this allows for more accurate data.

Sources: figures 6.6 and 6.14; tables 6A.11 and 6A.17.

[END]

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Please do not approach other parties for comment before Wednesday 30 January 2002.

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