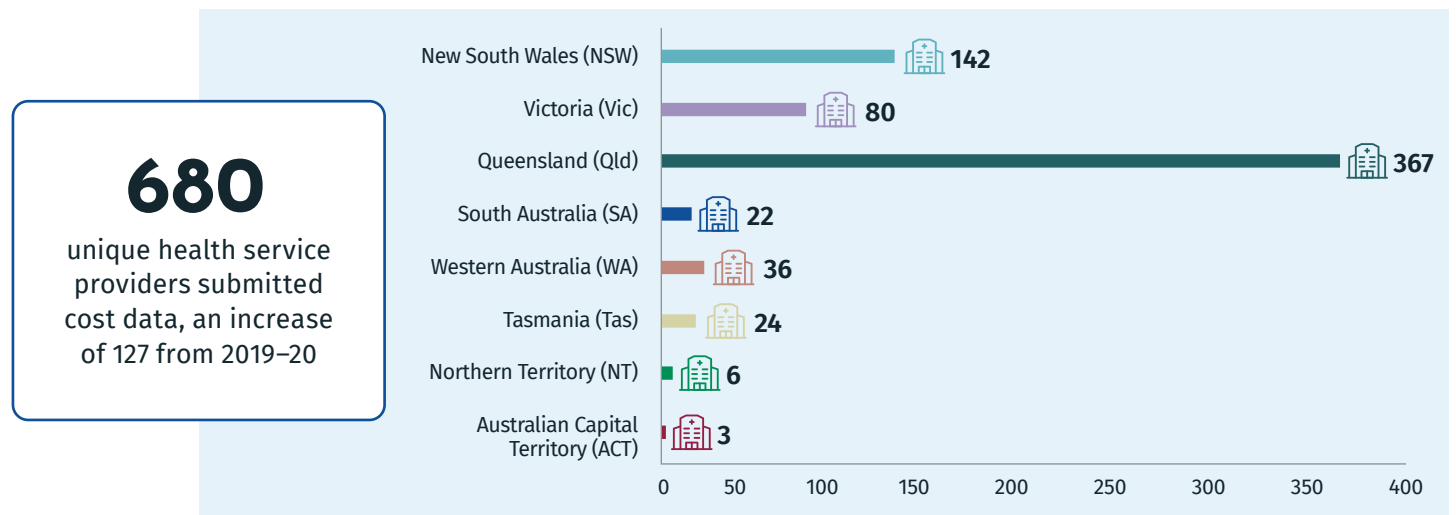


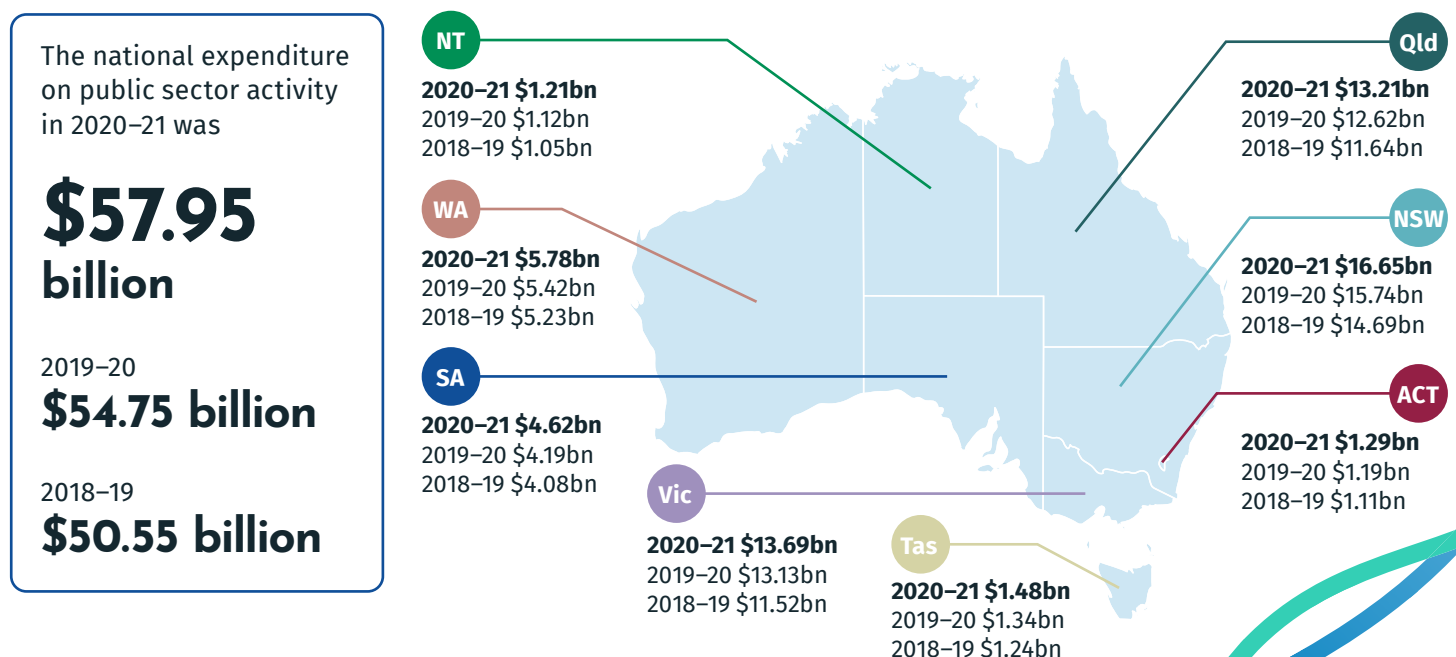
This National Hospital Cost Data Collection (NHCDC) collected public hospital (including health service providers) cost information for the 2020–21 financial year. It is important to note that the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic has impacted the accuracy and completeness of this year’s public hospital expenditure and activity. As a result, this year may not be consistent with prior years and across jurisdictions.

The NHCDC report contains detailed summary tables of all reported figures. Data quality statements provided by each jurisdiction describe the methodology applied when allocating costs to activity when preparing their NHCDC. The below figures show the number of public hospitals, which include contracted care facilities. A contracted care activity occurs when a public institution (for example a public hospital) commissions another institution (for example a private hospital) to provide a service.

Number of public hospitals (including health service providers) that submitted NHCDC data



How much does patient activity cost in Australia?



Patient activity streams

Patient activity refers to services and procedures received by the patient in relation to their care. The NHCDC results are presented by the following five broad patient activity streams.



Admitted acute care

An admitted acute care **patient separation** represents a formal admission to hospital to receive short-term treatment. This includes treating illnesses, injuries, performing surgery or diagnostic procedures and managing childbirth.



Non-admitted care

A non-admitted **patient service event** represents a patient encounter that has not undergone the formal hospital admission process and do not occupy a hospital bed. This includes hospital outpatient clinics, community based clinics and patients' homes.



Subacute and non-acute care

Subacute and non-acute care **patient separations** represent the delivery of a specialised care service that is related to the optimisation of the patient's functioning and quality of life. This includes psychogeriatric care, geriatric evaluation and management care, rehabilitation and palliative care.



Emergency department care

An emergency department **presentation** represents the delivery of a service provided to a patient in a hospital's emergency department. Emergency departments are dedicated hospital-based facilities specifically designed and staffed to provide 24-hour emergency care.



Mental health care

A mental health care **service event** or **phase** represents the delivery of a mental health care service to a patient and can be provided either in an admitted or a community setting.

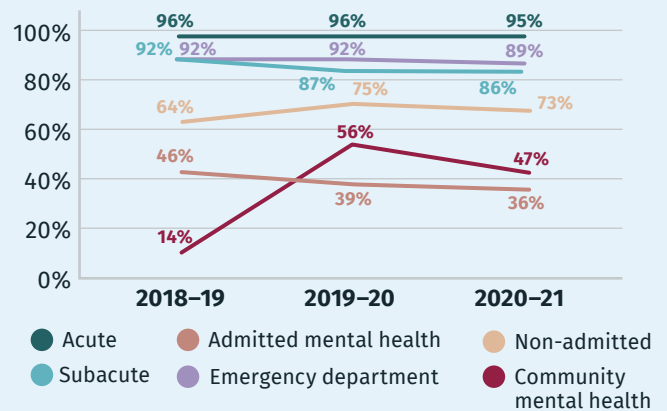
Costed activity

In addition to submitting cost data to the NHCDC, jurisdictions submit activity data to IHACPA for activity based funding purposes. When both activity and NHCDC cost data relating to a particular patient episode are submitted, IHACPA links the data.

The completeness of the NHCDC is measured by the percentage of linked activity data, this is also known as 'costed activity'.

95 per cent of the admitted acute care episode (submitted through IHACPA's activity data collection) had matching cost data.

Level of costed activity for 2018-19 to 2020-21



Cost buckets

IHACPA reports on cost data submitted to the NHCDC using cost buckets. Cost buckets represent cost pools within a hospital, which relate to a particular function of the hospital – for example, the hospital operating room.

For 2020-21, the ward nursing cost bucket accounted for the biggest share of the costs for the admitted acute (**18.3 per cent**), subacute (**32.5 per cent**) and admitted mental health (**36.4 per cent**) activity streams. The table below provides the proportions of costs by selected cost buckets.

Proportion of costs by selected cost buckets, by activity stream

Cost bucket	Acute %	Subacute %	Emergency department %	Non-admitted %	Admitted mental health %	Community mental health %
Ward medical	11.9	12.6	0.8	16.1	15.3	14.1
Ward nursing	18.3	32.5	1.8	14.0	36.4	24.0
Allied health	3.1	11.4	0.5	10.5	5.1	22.9
Non-clinical	6.3	10.5	1.3	9.6	11.4	12.8
On-costs	7.4	8.9	7.6	6.7	9.3	9.8
Pathology	3.4	1.0	6.6	5.3	0.8	0.9
Imaging	2.5	0.8	10.0	4.1	0.3	0.1
Prosthesis	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0
Total (%)	55.9	77.7	28.5	66.7	78.5	84.6

Number of encounters per activity stream

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Admitted acute separations	6,212,682	6,141,848	6,360,259
Subacute and non-acute separations	224,043	212,614	205,932
Emergency department presentations	8,184,682	8,172,976	8,429,214
Non-admitted service events	20,731,176	24,318,538	29,033,822
Admitted mental health records	136,818	118,363	114,527
Community mental records	193,875	467,539	428,432

Total number of encounters for 2020-21

45,118,041

Admitted acute care

The national expenditure on admitted acute patient activity was

\$33.80 billion

58.3%

This represents the total hospital expenditure reported in the NHCDC in 2020–21.

2019–20

\$32.77 billion

2018–19

\$31.23 billion

Number of hospitals that submitted admitted acute care cost data



The national average cost per admitted acute care separation for 2020–21 was

\$5,315

2019–20
\$5,335

2018–19
\$5,027

The data contains detailed cost information for

6,360,259

admitted acute care separations

14.1%

Taken together, admitted acute care accounted for 14.1 per cent of all hospital patient activity reported in the 2020–21 NHCDC.

The separations were captured through 793 different Australian Refined Diagnosis Related Groups (AR-DRG) Version 10.0. The most commonly reported AR-DRGs related to haemodialysis, chemotherapy and chest pain.

Comparing patient complexity

To compare costs between jurisdictions, IHACPA uses 'weighted patient separations'. A weighted separation considers the relative complexity associated with treating each patient. This is based on the average cost required to treat that separation type at the national level.

For example, in 2020–21, a single heart transplant patient separation accounted for **49.87 weighted separations**. A colonoscopy (major complexity) accounted for **1.24 weighted separations**. This reflects the greater complexity of heart transplants.

If a jurisdiction's average cost per weighted separation is lower than its average cost per separation, that jurisdiction's activity is comprised of a higher proportion of complex AR-DRGs.

Highest volume AR-DRGs for 2020-21

AR-DRG	Description	Separations	Average length of stay	Average cost (\$)
L61Z	Haemodialysis	1,332,653	1.0	604
R63Z	Chemotherapy	283,853	1.0	2,507
F74B	Chest Pain, Minor Complexity	113,306	1.1	856
G48B	Colonoscopy, Minor Complexity	100,612	1.1	2,622
O66C	Antenatal and Other Obstetric Admissions, Minor Complexity	73,200	1.1	1,048

Highest volume AR-DRGs for 2019-20

AR-DRG	Description	Separations	Average length of stay	Average cost (\$)
L61Z	Haemodialysis	1,271,068	1.0	606
R63Z	Chemotherapy	272,429	1.0	2,126
F74B	Chest pain	112,322	1.1	899
G48B	Colonoscopy	92,106	1.1	2,565
C16Z	Lens interventions	59,826	1.0	3,176

National results for admitted acute care



	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Average cost per separation (\$)	5,443	5,825	5,757
Average cost per weighted separation (\$)	4,894	5,224	5,171
Same-day as % of all separations	48.4	49.4	50.9
Average length of stay (days)	2.86	2.86	2.83
Average length of stay (days) — excl. same-day	4.61	4.67	4.72



	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Average cost per separation (\$)	4,505	4,919	5,214
Average cost per weighted separation (\$)	4,746	5,104	5,378
Same-day as % of all separations	61.3	61.7	62.3
Average length of stay (days)	2.21	2.22	2.25
Average length of stay (days) — excl. same-day	4.14	4.19	4.32



	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Average cost per separation (\$)	4,542	4,879	4,636
Average cost per weighted separation (\$)	4,799	5,137	4,862
Same-day as % of all separations	60.4	61.4	62.4
Average length of stay (days)	2.06	2.03	2.00
Average length of stay (days) — excl. same-day	3.67	3.66	3.66



	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Average cost per separation (\$)	6,345	6,287	5,989
Average cost per weighted separation (\$)	5,782	5,778	5,587
Same-day as % of all separations	52.0	52.9	54.6
Average length of stay (days)	2.65	2.58	2.52
Average length of stay (days) — excl. same-day	4.43	4.35	4.34



	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Average cost per separation (\$)	5,864	5,792	5,710
Average cost per weighted separation (\$)	5,859	5,960	5,959
Same-day as % of all separations	60.0	62.2	63.4
Average length of stay (days)	2.15	2.08	2.07
Average length of stay (days) — excl. same-day	3.89	3.85	3.92



	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Average cost per separation (\$)	5,940	6,658	6,700
Average cost per weighted separation (\$)	5,602	6,432	6,317
Same-day as % of all separations	54.8	56.8	57.7
Average length of stay (days)	2.63	2.61	2.63
Average length of stay (days) — excl. same-day	4.60	4.73	4.84



	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Average cost per separation (\$)	3,695	3,821	4,111
Average cost per weighted separation (\$)	6,518	6,736	7,005
Same-day as % of all separations	73.0	73.3	72.5
Average length of stay (days)	1.89	1.85	1.84
Average length of stay (days) — excl. same-day	4.27	4.17	4.05



	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Average cost per separation (\$)	5,690	6,076	5,902
Average cost per weighted separation (\$)	5,243	5,704	5,706
Same-day as % of all separations	53.0	54.3	56.0
Average length of stay (days)	2.59	2.63	2.49
Average length of stay (days) — excl. same-day	4.38	4.57	4.39



	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Average cost per separation (\$)	5,027	5,335	5,315
Average cost per weighted separation (\$)	5,027	5,335	5,315
Same-day as % of all separations	57.0	58.0	59.1
Average length of stay (days)	2.38	2.35	2.34
Average length of stay (days) — excl. same-day	4.21	4.23	4.26

Subacute and non-acute care

The national expenditure on subacute and non-acute patient activity was

\$3.32 billion

This represents **5.7 per cent** of total hospital expenditure reported in the 2020–21 NHDC.

5.7%

2019–20

\$3.28 billion

2018–19

\$3.14 billion

Number of hospitals that submitted subacute and non-acute care cost data



340
2020–21



332
2019–20



337
2018–19



The national average cost per AN-SNAP class in 2020–21 was

\$16,118

IHACPA uses the Australian National Subacute and Non-Acute Patient Classification (AN-SNAP) system to classify subacute and non-acute care.

2019–20
\$15,439

2018–19
\$14,006

The subacute and non-acute care data contains detailed cost information for

205,932 patient separations

0.5%

This represents **0.5 per cent** of all hospital patient activity reported in the 2020–21 NHDC.

National average cost per subacute care type

	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Psychogeriatric care	41,038	42,809	45,845
Geriatric evaluation and management	17,635	18,713	19,165
Rehabilitation care	16,974	18,822	19,603
Palliative care	6,562	6,872	7,790

National results

NSW	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	899	930	920
Separations	84,253	79,520	75,707
Average cost per separation (\$/sep)	10,669	11,691	12,148
Number of hospitals	93	91	88
Average length of stay	14	14	10

Vic	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	821	863	828
Separations	54,719	52,152	45,755
Average cost per separation (\$/sep)	15,008	16,544	18,092
Number of hospitals	62	62	63
Average length of stay	19	19	16

Qld	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	714	729	803
Separations	49,566	44,027	49,752
Average cost per separation (\$/sep)	14,395	16,563	16,146
Number of hospitals	102	100	110
Average length of stay	11	12	11

SA	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	198	221	241
Separations	13,330	14,309	11,840
Average cost per separation (\$/sep)	14,849	15,422	20,354
Number of hospitals	17	17	18
Average length of stay	15	15	17

WA	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	298	325	315
Separations	11,847	12,151	12,396
Average cost per separation (\$/sep)	25,123	26,744	25,377
Number of hospitals	33	33	31
Average length of stay	17	17	16

Tas	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	55	58	62
Separations	3,530	3,401	3,213
Average cost per separation (\$/sep)	15,460	17,114	19,360
Number of hospitals	21	20	21
Average length of stay	18	18	18

NT	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	64	64	55
Separations	1,230	1,911	2,022
Average cost per separation (\$/sep)	52,050	33,248	27,384
Number of hospitals	6	6	6
Average length of stay	29	25	15

ACT	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	90	93	95
Separations	5,568	5,143	5,247
Average cost per separation (\$/sep)	16,207	18,161	18,171
Number of hospitals	3	3	3
Average length of stay	11	14	14

National	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	3,138	3,282	3,319
Separations	224,043	212,614	205,932
Average cost per separation (\$/sep)	14,006	15,439	16,118
Number of hospitals	337	332	340
Average length of stay	15	15	13

Emergency department care

The national expenditure on emergency department patient activity was

\$6.65 billion

This represents **11.5 per cent** of total hospital expenditure reported in the 2020–21 NHCDC.

11.5%

2019–20

\$6.33 billion

2018–19

\$5.99 billion

Number of hospitals that submitted emergency department care cost data



273
2020–21



276
2019–20



276
2018–19



The national average cost per emergency department presentation in 2020–21 was

\$789

2019–20
\$775

2018–19
\$732

The data contains detailed cost information for

8,429,214

emergency department presentations

18.7%

Taken together, emergency department presentations accounted for 18.7 per cent of all hospital patient activity reported in the 2020–21 NHCDC.

National results

NSW	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	1,854	1,969	2,012
Avg cost per ED presentation (\$)	700	766	798
Avg cost per admitted ED presentation (\$)	981	1,058	1,107
Avg cost per non-admitted ED presentation (\$)	595	657	681
% of ED presentations admitted to hospital	27	27	26
Vic	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	1,255	1,368	1,441
Avg cost per ED presentation (\$)	698	714	846
Avg cost per admitted ED presentation (\$)	1,032	1,121	1,235
Avg cost per non-admitted ED presentation (\$)	489	554	611
% of ED presentations admitted to hospital	37	33	37
Qld	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	1,441	1,440	1,526
Avg cost per ED presentation (\$)	729	740	663
Avg cost per admitted ED presentation (\$)	1,067	1,088	1,032
Avg cost per non-admitted ED presentation (\$)	569	577	527
% of ED presentations admitted to hospital	32	32	27
SA	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	406	438	499
Avg cost per ED presentation (\$)	787	827	835
Avg cost per admitted ED presentation (\$)	1,046	1,086	1,210
Avg cost per non-admitted ED presentation (\$)	645	684	685
% of ED presentations admitted to hospital	32	33	30
WA	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	656	689	719
Avg cost per ED presentation (\$)	861	922	894
Avg cost per admitted ED presentation (\$)	1,464	1,499	1,466
Avg cost per non-admitted ED presentation (\$)	661	723	726
% of ED presentations admitted to hospital	24	24	22

Tas	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	134	156	169
Avg cost per ED presentation (\$)	805	1,012	990
Avg cost per admitted ED presentation (\$)	1,608	1,896	1,702
Avg cost per non-admitted ED presentation (\$)	444	666	740
% of ED presentations admitted to hospital	32	28	27
NT	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	124	138	167
Avg cost per ED presentation (\$)	753	837	939
Avg cost per admitted ED presentation (\$)	1,009	1,141	1,458
Avg cost per non-admitted ED presentation (\$)	602	640	654
% of ED presentations admitted to hospital	35	37	34
ACT	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	119	134	118
Avg cost per ED presentation (\$)	799	957	767
Avg cost per admitted ED presentation (\$)	1,414	1,643	1,188
Avg cost per non-admitted ED presentation (\$)	531	630	558
% of ED presentations admitted to hospital	31	33	34
National	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Total expenditure (\$m)	5,991	6,333	6,650
Avg cost per ED presentation (\$)	732	775	789
Avg cost per admitted ED presentation (\$)	1,076	1,144	1,176
Avg cost per non-admitted ED presentation (\$)	573	626	628
% of ED presentations admitted to hospital	31	30	29

Non-admitted care

The national expenditure on non-admitted patient activity was

\$9.92 billion

This represents **17.1 per cent** of total hospital expenditure reported in the 2020–21 NHDC.

17.1%

2019–20

\$8.52 billion

2018–19

\$6.89 billion

Number of hospitals that submitted non-admitted care cost data



415
2020–21



362
2019–20



332
2018–19



The national average cost per non-admitted care service event in 2020–21 was

\$342

2019–20
\$350

2018–19
\$332

The data contains detailed cost information for

29,033,822

non-admitted patient service events

64.4%

Taken together, non-admitted care accounted for 64.4 per cent of all hospital patient activity reported in the 2020–21 NHDC.

IHACPA uses the Tier 2 Non-Admitted Services Classification (Tier 2) to classify non-admitted care. The classification splits clinics by whether a procedure was undertaken and by those led by medical, nurse practitioner or allied health personnel.

Tier 2 results from 2020–21

Tier 2	Description	Service events	Total expenditure (\$m)	Average cost per service event (\$)
Procedures (10 series)	Clinics with healthcare professionals that provide procedural based health services, which include treatment related to chemotherapy, renal dialysis, radiation therapy.	2,901,130	1,263	435
Medical consultation (20 series)	Clinics where medical consultation is provided by a medical or nurse practitioner, which includes treatment related to ophthalmology, orthopaedics, and obstetrics.	11,316,227	4,771	422
Diagnostic service (30 series)	Clinics that provide diagnostic services as inputs to the healthcare services of other non-admitted clinics, which includes pathology, mammography screening.	2,256,263	520	230
Allied health or clinical nurse specialist intervention (40 series)	Clinics where there are allied health personnel or clinical nurse specialists providing the majority of services in a clinic, which includes midwifery, physiotherapy, and primary healthcare.	11,725,476	3,073	262

This table excludes 834,726 service events with missing Tier 2 classifications.

National results for non-admitted activity



	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total expenditure (\$m)	1,863	2,202	3,036
Total service events	7,066,650	7,717,128	10,363,280
Average cost per service event (\$)	264	285	293
Average cost per medical consultation – 20 series (\$)	291	321	371
Average cost per allied health / clinical nurse intervention – 40 series (\$)	187	208	225



	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total expenditure (\$m)	966	1,684	1,845
Total service events	2,829,584	4,872,486	5,038,904
Average cost per service event (\$)	341	346	366
Average cost per medical consultation – 20 series (\$)	417	415	427
Average cost per allied health / clinical nurse intervention – 40 series (\$)	229	239	267



	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total expenditure (\$m)	1,938	2,335	2,463
Total service events	5,456,805	6,074,761	6,774,890
Average cost per service event (\$)	355	384	364
Average cost per medical consultation – 20 series (\$)	382	399	393
Average cost per allied health / clinical nurse intervention – 40 series (\$)	281	325	327



	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total expenditure (\$m)	778	857	933
Total service events	1,537,493	1,699,229	2,086,861
Average cost per service event (\$)	506	504	447
Average cost per medical consultation – 20 series (\$)	564	601	579
Average cost per allied health / clinical nurse intervention – 40 series (\$)	220	228	203



	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total expenditure (\$m)	759	817	917
Total service events	2,168,321	2,255,748	2,734,270
Average cost per service event (\$)	350	362	335
Average cost per medical consultation – 20 series (\$)	445	469	428
Average cost per allied health / clinical nurse intervention – 40 series (\$)	234	240	239



	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total expenditure (\$m)	207	215	271
Total service events	552,297	564,802	705,105
Average cost per service event (\$)	375	380	385
Average cost per medical consultation – 20 series (\$)	353	402	624
Average cost per allied health / clinical nurse intervention – 40 series (\$)	277	314	296



	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total expenditure (\$m)	152	158	173
Total service events	301,056	311,963	357,919
Average cost per service event (\$)	506	508	484
Average cost per medical consultation – 20 series (\$)	566	598	538
Average cost per allied health / clinical nurse intervention – 40 series (\$)	286	305	370



	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total expenditure (\$m)	226	248	278
Total service events	818,970	822,421	972,593
Average cost per service event (\$)	276	301	286
Average cost per medical consultation – 20 series (\$)	391	421	448
Average cost per allied health / clinical nurse intervention – 40 series (\$)	199	234	240



	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total expenditure (\$m)	6,890	8,516	9,917
Total service events	20,731,176	24,318,538	29,033,822
Average cost per service event (\$)	332	350	342
Average cost per medical consultation – 20 series (\$)	387	408	422
Average cost per allied health / clinical nurse intervention – 40 series (\$)	228	254	262

Mental health care

The national expenditure on mental health patient activity was

\$3.81 billion

This represents **6.6 per cent** of total hospital expenditure reported in the 2020–21 NHDC.

6.6%

2019–20

\$3.78 billion

2018–19

\$3.22 billion

Mental health care is provided to patients in both admitted and community settings in Australia. IHACPA reports mental health costs using the Australian Mental Health Care Classification.

The admitted setting includes consumers who are formally admitted for treatment in a general ward or a designated psychiatric unit in a general or a psychiatric hospital.

Number of hospitals that submitted admitted mental health care cost data



193
2020–21



169
2019–20



222
2018–19

The national average cost per admitted mental health patient separation in 2020–21 was

\$19,984

The community setting includes mental health care services delivered to consumers who are not admitted to an inpatient facility or reside in a residential mental health care facility.

Number of services that submitted community mental health care cost data



201
2020–21



173
2019–20



123
2018–19

The national average cost per community mental health patient separation in 2020–21 was

\$2,876

Mental health care summary, 2019–20 to 2020–21

Mental health setting	2019–20				2020–21			
	Number of hospitals	Episodes	Phases	Total expenditure (\$m)	Number of hospitals	Episodes	Phases	Total expenditure (\$m)
Admitted mental health	169	45,427	72,936	2,279	193	45,110	69,417	2,289
Community mental health	173	22,332	445,207	1,221	201	22,622	405,810	1,232

This table excludes 242,634 and 516,984 unlinked episodes in 2019–20 and 2020–21, respectively.

Further information

To learn more about the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority, get in touch with us via the details below.

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Find us online to connect with us.

Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority

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