

## Question on Notice

No. 1478

Asked on 16 November 2023

**MS R BATES** ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (HON S FENTIMAN)—

### QUESTION

With reference to patients waiting for an initial service event in a Specialist Outpatient Clinic—

Will the Minister advise (reported separately by the 29 specialties listed on the Queensland Reporting Hospitals website) as at 30 September 2023 (a) the total number of patients waiting for an initial service event in a Specialist Outpatient Clinic and (b) the number of patients who have not been seen within the clinically recommended time waiting for an initial service event in a Specialist Outpatient Clinic?

### ANSWER

Queensland's health system, like health systems across the world, is experiencing a range of pressures, including a global workforce shortage and rapid population growth leading to increased demand.

Demand for specialist outpatient appointments has increased by nearly 50 per cent since 2016, with approximately 685,000 referrals received in the 2022-23 financial year alone.

That growth has continued into this financial year, with referrals increasing by nine per cent compared to the same time last year.

And service delivery is also increasing, with 676,435 appointments delivered in the last financial year.

In very promising news for Queenslanders, I am advised that Queensland Health has delivered 12.4 per cent more specialist outpatient appointments than at this time last year, and approximately 19 per cent above pre-COVID levels.

This progress shows that our investments are working. For example, in September, I announced that we would be investing \$224 million to deliver 50,000 additional elective surgeries and specialist outpatients this financial year.

I am advised that the list below outlines the total number of patients waiting for an initial service event at a specialist outpatient clinic, and the total number of patients who have not been seen within the clinically recommended timeframes (long waits).

This data is as at 1 October 2023, and includes patients who were not ready for care as at the census date.

**Total number of patients on waitlist by specialty:**

Cardiac Surgery - 357  
Cardiology - 14,119  
Dermatology - 5,439  
Diabetes - 1,481  
Ear Nose and Throat - 34,452  
Endocrinology - 3,298  
Gastroenterology - 13,193  
General Medicine - 2,119  
General Surgery - 21,489  
Geriatrics - 1,685  
Gynaecology - 15,043  
Medical Other - 16,610  
Nephrology - 2,161  
Neurology - 8,742  
Neurosurgery - 4,168  
Obstetrics - 3,179  
Oncology - 1,319  
Ophthalmology - 27,706  
Orthopaedic - 37,097  
Paediatric Medicine - 15,408  
Paediatric Surgery - 3,090  
Pain Management - 3,697  
Palliative Care – 237  
Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery - 5,740  
Respiratory - 6,763  
Rheumatology - 4,918  
Surgical Other - 5,669  
Urology - 13,450  
Vascular Surgery - 3,373

**Total number of long wait patients by specialty:**

Cardiac Surgery - 31  
Cardiology - 5,790  
Dermatology - 3,087  
Diabetes - 622  
Ear Nose and Throat - 15,021  
Endocrinology - 1,101  
Gastroenterology - 7,435  
General Medicine - 501  
General Surgery - 7,773  
Geriatrics - 680  
Gynaecology - 2,679  
Medical Other - 5,002  
Nephrology - 467  
Neurology - 4,003  
Neurosurgery - 2,196  
Obstetrics - 172  
Oncology - 154  
Ophthalmology - 16,270  
Orthopaedic - 13,398

Paediatric Medicine - 4,747  
Paediatric Surgery - 1,026  
Pain Management - 970  
Palliative Care – 39  
Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery - 3,266  
Respiratory - 2,999  
Rheumatology - 2,282  
Surgical Other - 2,511  
Urology - 8,115  
Vascular Surgery - 1,170