

Question on Notice

No. 929

Asked on 23 August 2023

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

QUESTION

With reference to answer to Question on Notice No. 101 of 2023 and 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 1 July 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.

But service delivery is also increasing, with 676,435 appointments delivered in the last financial year, an increase of 55,284 (8.9 per cent) on the previous financial year.

In very promising news for Queenslanders, I am advised that Queensland Health's specialist outpatient capacity is 18.6 per cent above pre-COVID levels.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to ensuring that Queenslanders have access to high quality health care when they need it. That's why we are investing \$174 million towards restoring planned care services, delivering an additional 30,000 appointments across this financial year.

I note that across 26 specialties, the total waitlist or long waits have reduced since 1 January 2023. In addition, the total waitlists across all 29 specialties have reduced by 12,971 (or 4.6 per cent) and the long waits have reduced by 7,821 (or 6.5 per cent).

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 July 2023, and includes patients who were not ready for care as at the census date. The below also notes comparisons against lists as at 1 January 2023, as provided in response to Question on Notice No. 101 of 2023.

	1-Jul-23		1-Jan-23	
Specialty	Total waitlist	Total long waits	Total waitlist	Total long waits
Cardiac Surgery	335	22	453	28
Cardiology	14123	5757	15409	7027
Dermatology	5415	3159	5437	3116
Diabetes	-	-	-	-
Ear Nose and Throat	34167	15275	32828	15161
Endocrinology	2382	1120	3519	1267
Gastroenterology	15118	8672	15895	9292
General Medicine	2337	656	2291	673
General Surgery	22353	8388	21606	7035
Geriatrics	1720	704	1667	740
Gynaecology	15148	3026	16325	4116
Medical Other	16776	4700	17661	5895
Nephrology	2252	465	2243	542
Neurology	8409	3587	8813	3865
Neurosurgery	3972	1989	4466	2080
Obstetrics	3182	118	3162	150
Oncology	1318	99	1270	185
Ophthalmology	22685	15291	26792	15348
Orthopaedic	37467	14413	40771	17042
Paediatric Medicine	15121	4470	15227	5088
Paediatric Surgery	2986	1067	3066	1082
Pain Management	3719	803	3651	716
Palliative Care	195	17	241	57
Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery	6113	3534	6011	3429
Respiratory	6897	3289	8127	4130
Rheumatology	5102	2555	5191	2526
Surgical Other	5594	2435	6249	2932
Urology	13384	7942	13004	7917
Vascular Surgery	3305	1158	3171	1093