

Question on Notice

No. 629

Asked on 22 May 2024

MR M HART 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 for each Hospital and Health Service (reported separately by specialties and in table format) for the 29 specialties listed on the Queensland Reporting Hospitals website as at 1 April 2024 (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 as at March 2024 has increased by 7.5 per cent compared to the same time last year, with an estimated 552,000 referrals received so far this financial year.

But service delivery is also increasing, with over 539,000 initial service events delivered so far this financial year, an increase of more than 40,500 (8.1 per cent) compared to the same time last year. This is also an increase of 9.1 per cent compared to March 2019 financial year to date.

In addition, across the state, the number of people waiting longer than clinically recommended as at 1 April 2024, has reduced by more than 6,600 (5.3 per cent) since wait lists peaked post-COVID on 1 February 2023.

I am advised that the below lists outline the total number of patients waiting for an initial service event at a specialist outpatient clinic, and the total number of patients on the waitlist who have not been seen within the clinically recommended timeframes (long waits) as at 1 April 2024. This list includes patients who were both ready and not ready for care as at the census date.

Specialty	Total Waitlist	Total Long Waits
Cardiac Surgery	320	42
Cardiology	16,383	7,716
Dermatology	5,244	3,056
Diabetes	1,802	773

Specialty	Total Waitlist	Total Long Waits
Ear Nose and Throat	34,905	15,396
Endocrinology	3,675	1,282
Gastroenterology	15,389	8,082
General Medicine	2,973	952
General Surgery	22,905	8,241
Geriatrics	1,802	870
Gynaecology	15,908	3,250
Medical Other	16,787	6,229
Nephrology	2,799	708
Neurology	9,580	4,902
Neurosurgery	4,921	2,516
Obstetrics	2,704	257
Oncology	1,258	132
Ophthalmology	27,217	15,612
Orthopaedic	37,793	12,917
Paediatric Medicine	16,511	5,734
Paediatric Surgery	2,393	724
Pain Management	3,825	1,023
Palliative Care	273	44
Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery	5,177	2,700
Respiratory	7,215	2,944
Rheumatology	5,049	2,341
Surgical Other	6,101	2,618
Urology	14,773	9,370
Vascular Surgery	4,278	1,594

Data Source: Specialist Outpatient Data Collection, 2022-23 Scope, May 2024