

Question on Notice

No. 84

Asked on 15 February 2024

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 each Hospital and Health Service) as at 1 January 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 in the 2024 financial year to date has increased by 8.8 per cent compared to the prior year, with almost 373,000 referrals received so far this financial year.

But service delivery is also increasing, with 358,946 initial service events delivered in the financial year to date, an increase of 33,714 (10.4 per cent) on the previous financial year.

In addition, across the state, the number of people waiting longer than clinically recommended has reduced by more than 5,500 (4.4 per cent) since wait lists peaked post-COVID on 1 February 2023.

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

HHS	Total Waitlist	Total Long Waits	Referrals Received (1 July 2023 to 1 January 2024)	Referrals Treated (1 July 2023 to 1 January 2024)
Cairns and Hinterland	22,450	12,437	22,664	21,317
Central Queensland	13,516	7,610	13,961	13,297

Children's Health Queensland	16,675	6,054	19,354	18,758
Darling Downs	8,359	2,200	13,707	15,423
Gold Coast	34,589	16,322	36,911	40,885
Mackay	12,814	7,002	13,315	11,201
Mater Health Service	11,087	1,005	19,745	18,812
Metro North	49,238	17,423	73,280	70,075
Metro South	58,095	28,034	73,493	67,584
North West	1,585	794	1,913	1,699
Sunshine Coast	21,334	7,881	32,219	32,076
Townsville	19,139	7,259	21,495	19,793
West Moreton	11,106	3,801	17,080	15,037
Wide Bay	11,520	3,817	13,538	12,989
Not Specified	0	1,517	-	-
Total	291,507	123,156	372,675	358,946

Source: Queensland Health, Specialist Outpatients Data Collection, 19/02/2024

Notes: All data is preliminary and subject to change.