

Australia will be short almost one in three GPs by 2032

Cornerstone Health Friday, May 6th, 2022

Updated research shows Australia's current GP shortage has reached crisis point with a predicted shortfall of 11,392 (28%) full-time General Practitioners (GPs) by 2032.

In [Cornerstone Health's General Practitioner \(GP\) Workforce Report 2022](#), published today, Deloitte Access Economics has forecast demand for GP services to outpace supply, resulting in a widening shortfall of FTE GPs from 2022 onwards.

Demand for GP services is estimated to increase between 2021 and 2032 by 38.5% with a growing and ageing population. This growth in demand for GP services will be most pronounced in our major cities, where it is predicted to grow by 47%. Full-time equivalent (FTE) GPs in major cities is projected to decrease over the next ten years by 15%.

The previously published 'General Practitioner Workforce Report 2019' predicted a shortfall of 9,298 full-time GPs (24.7% of the GP workforce) by 2030. Today's report demonstrates the combined impacts of continuation of current policy and increased demands on general practice because of the pandemic have only contributed to a worsening of the issue.

In per capita terms, the average Australian in 2021 demanded 2.1 hours of GP care per annum. This is forecast to grow to 2.5 hours per annum by 2032. Meanwhile, supply of GP clinical hours per person is estimated to decline to 1.8 hours per annum by 2032 from 2.2 hours per annum in 2021. This indicates an average annual shortfall for Australians of 40 minutes of GP care per year by 2032.

For regional and remote areas of Australia, a comparison of supply and demand has projected that there will be a 1.3% surplus in FTE GPs by 2032. For these communities, current strategies to abate the healthcare crisis are predicted to be successful. However, because these strategies have not addressed the underlying cause of the shortfall, the GP shortage crisis will now shift towards our major cities and populations.

Cornerstone Health's CEO, Henry Bateman has commented on the report:

"As the older generation of general practitioners retire (with the inevitable loss of experience and expertise), and a smaller number of Australia's medical graduates choose to specialise in general practice, the market will not keep up with a predicted 38.5% increase in demand for GP services by 2032.

"This issue is now at crisis point as the situation will not improve if the current policy settings remain in place. In terms of supply of GPs, the only way to make general practice more appealing to medical graduates is to activate GP training with more meaningful pathways and to financially incentivise medical graduates to pursue general practice.

"We must increase funding for General Practice via increased Medicare rebates to improve the remuneration prospects for graduate doctors and to protect the health of all of us.

Contact Profile

Cornerstone Health

Cornerstone Health's purpose is to increase access to quality healthcare for all Australians. Our contemporary medical centres offer a full range of primary healthcare services under one roof, open until 10pm every day. All GP consultations are Medicare bulk billed. Our network of large-scale medical centres, branded 'Our Medical' spans fast growing locations around Greater Sydney, Greater Melbourne, Greater Brisbane and on the Gold Coast.

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“The cost-of-living pressures that are affecting all Australians are also impacting our essential GP workforce. Despite escalating operational costs, the Medicare rebate increases are indexed at just 1.5%, after an extended index freeze between 2014 and 2018. This will only lead to more GPs requiring patients to pay an out-of-pocket fee every time they see a GP - just to cover their operating expenses of general practice”.

About the Report

Cornerstone Health’s GP Workforce Report 2022 :

- Illustrates the widening gap between demand for GP services and lack of growth in the supply of GPs,
- Demonstrates that overtime, the unmet need will increasingly affect metropolitan areas,
- Reviews the major government policies that have impacted the GP workforce over the past few years - providing short-term fixes without a long term solution,
- Outlines factors leading to a decrease in GPs including a reduction in the number of medical graduates choosing to specialise in general practice, and an over-reliance on Overseas Trained Doctors (OTDs), and
- Outlines factors leading to an increased demand for GP services including a population that is living longer with increased prevalence for chronic conditions, and the impact of COVID-19.

An online petition calling for greater funding for general practice setup last month has already attracted over 12,000 signatures and growing:

<https://www.change.org/SaveOurGPs>

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For More Information

Henry Bateman, CEO, Cornerstone Health and local GPs are available for phone interview or at one of our medical centres. Please call Katie White 0498 078 949 to organise.

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More: <https://www.cornerstonehealth.com.au/>