



GENERAL PRACTICE  
HEALTH  
— OF THE —  
NATION

2020

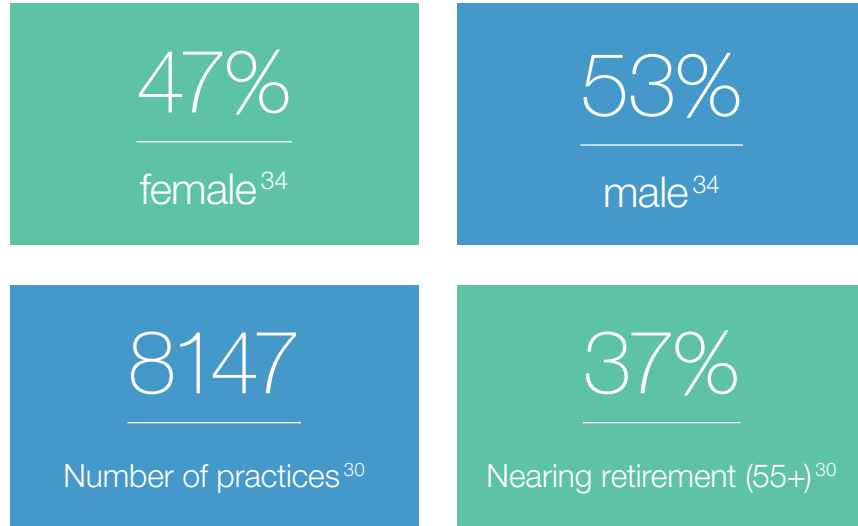
## Summary report

The annual *General Practice: Health of the Nation* survey is specifically commissioned research, which this year involved 1782 RACGP Fellows from all parts of Australia. The online survey was undertaken by EY Sweeney in May 2020.

Each year, RACGP members select a topic of focus for the report. Our 2020 report focuses on the unique environment created by the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic and the 2019–20 summer bushfires. The challenge to general practitioners (GPs) of adapting processes and responding to crises is reflected in survey findings throughout the report.

View the [full report](#) for full details and references.

## GP workforce characteristics



GPs per 100,000 population

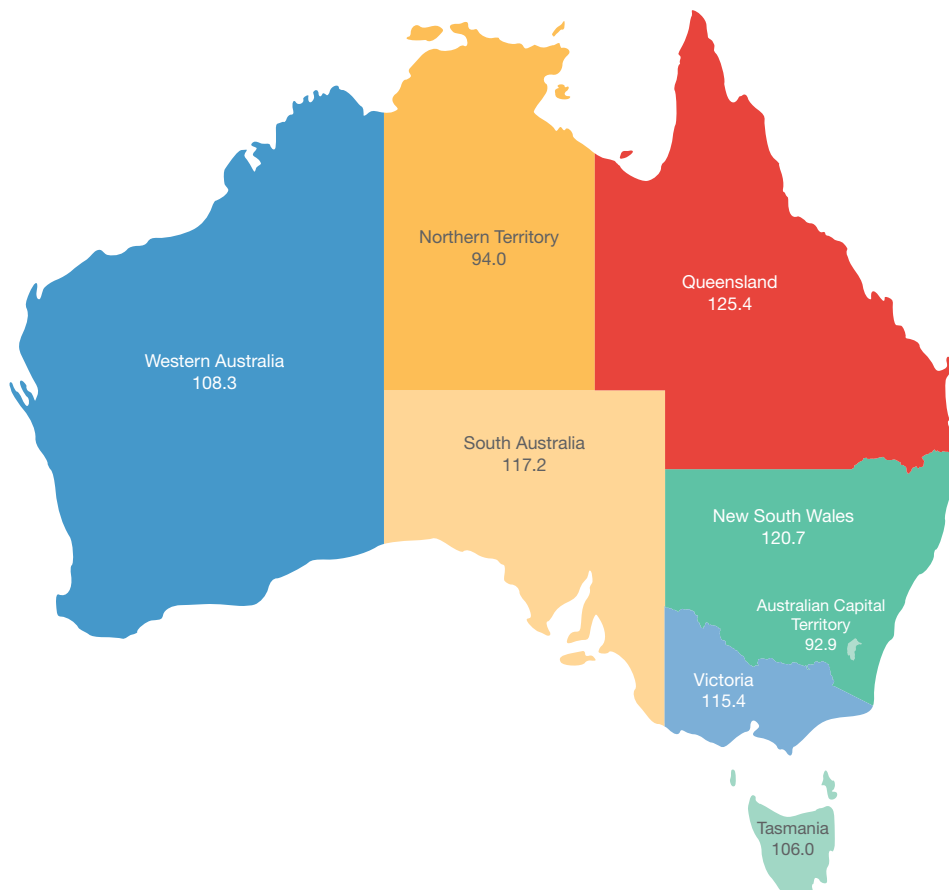
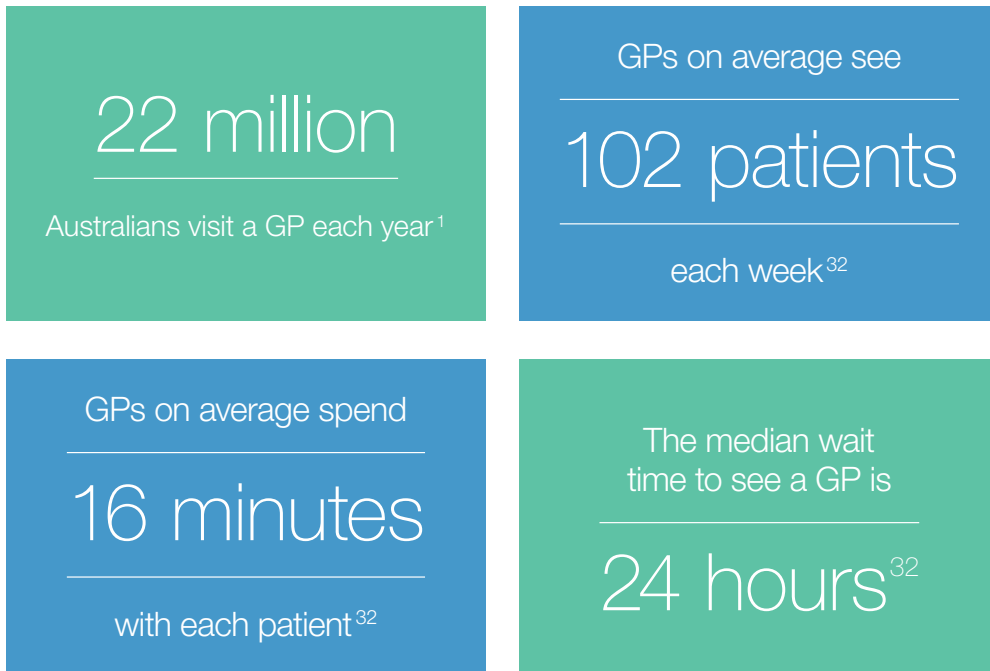


Figure 16

## The work day of a GP



GPs told us the most common patient presentations during COVID-19<sup>5</sup> were:

- psychological (eg depression, sleep disturbance)
- preventive (eg immunisation/vaccination, diet)
- respiratory (eg cough, asthma, sinusitis, suspected COVID-19)
- musculoskeletal (eg back/neck pain, arthritis)

GPs spend most of their day seeing patients

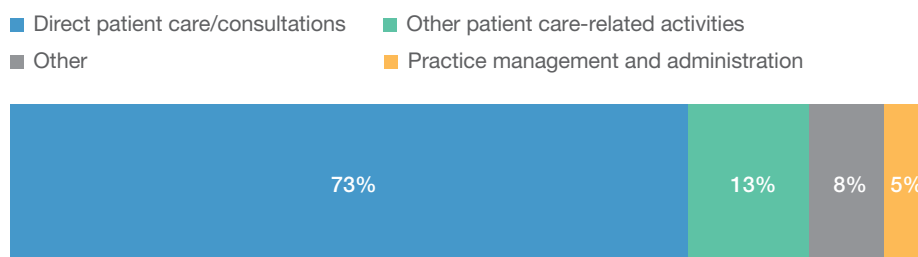


Figure 44

# Issues requiring policy action

GPs want the Australian Government to prioritise primary care funding, mental health and telehealth

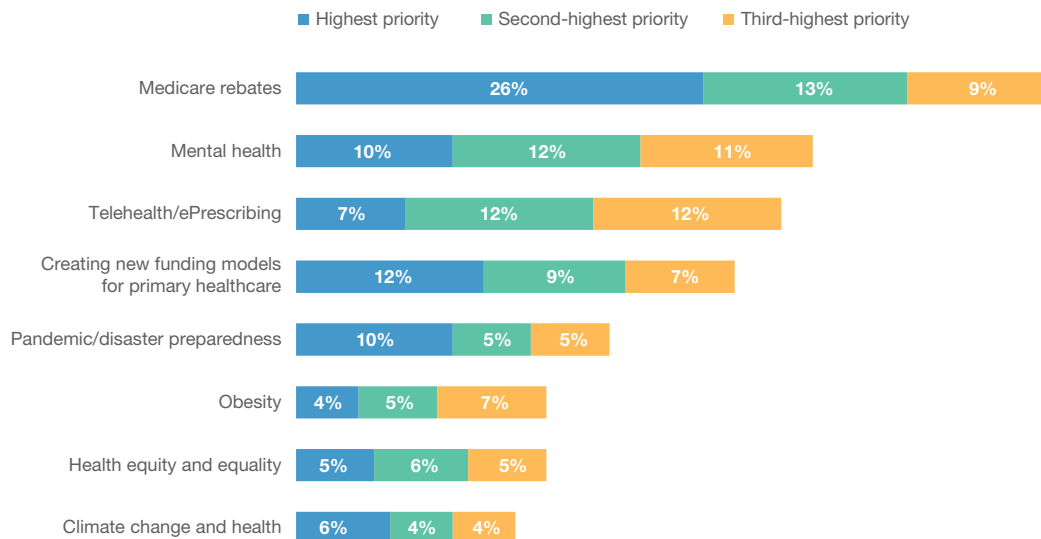


Figure 5

# Challenges faced by GPs during the COVID-19 pandemic

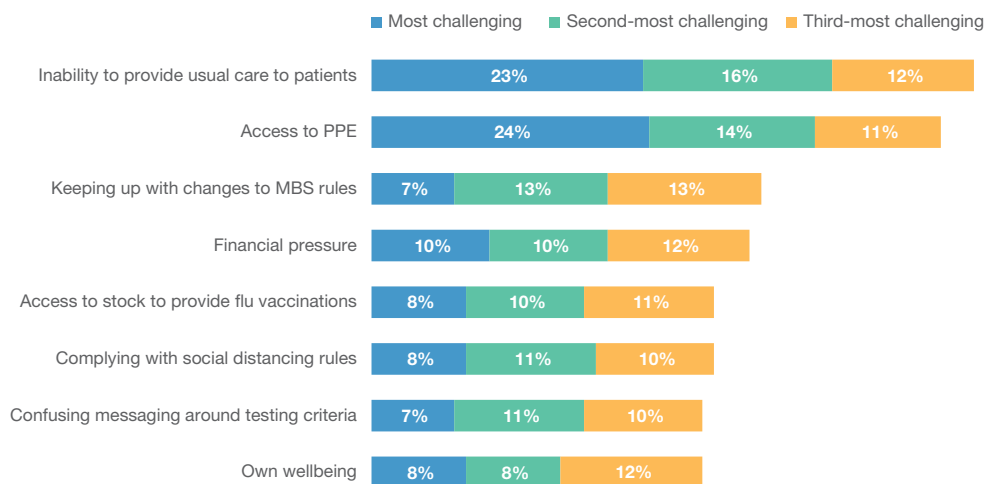


Figure 8

# Mental health impact of COVID-19 on GPs

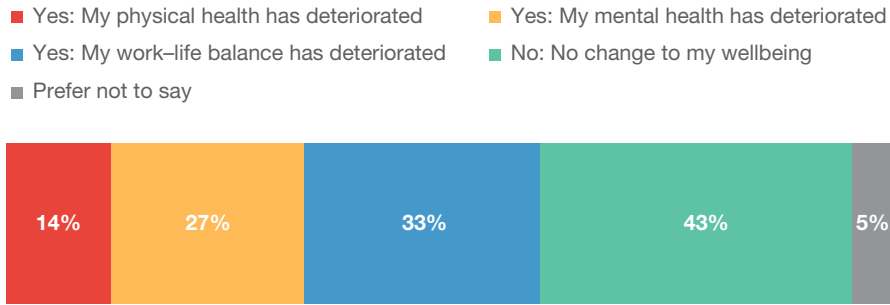


Figure 4

# Telehealth

Telehealth use has increased significantly since the start of the pandemic

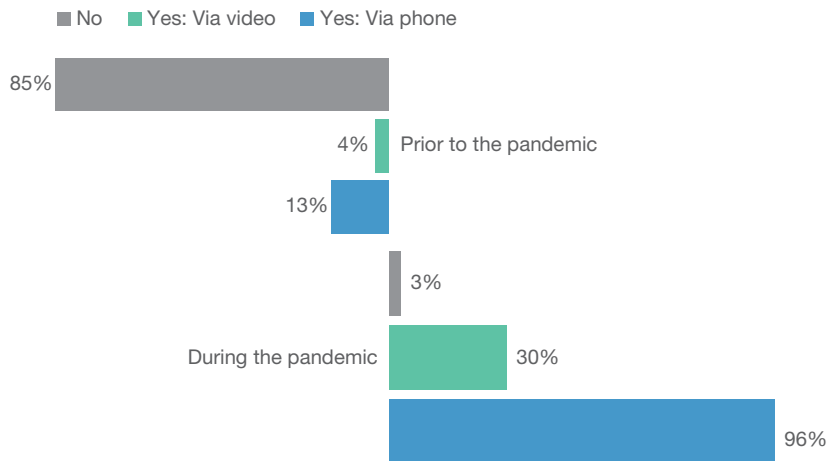


Figure 28

**67%** of GPs feel more positive toward using telehealth as a result of the pandemic<sup>5</sup>

The main reasons for GPs feeling more positive toward using telehealth

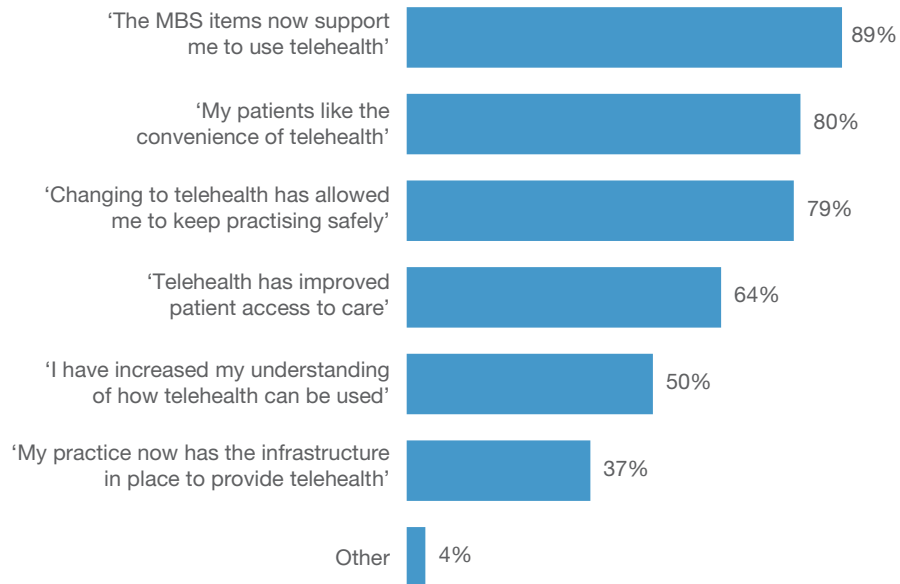


Figure 31

7 in 10

GPs think that continuing telehealth after the pandemic would support patient access to high-quality care in general practice<sup>24</sup>

## Funding general practice

GPs are bulk billing more patients as a result of the pandemic.<sup>5</sup> Similar to the large parts of the community, GP income has been negatively affected by the pandemic.

- Much lower than the same time last year
- Lower than the same time last year
- About the same as the same time last year
- Higher than the same time last year
- Much higher than the same time last year

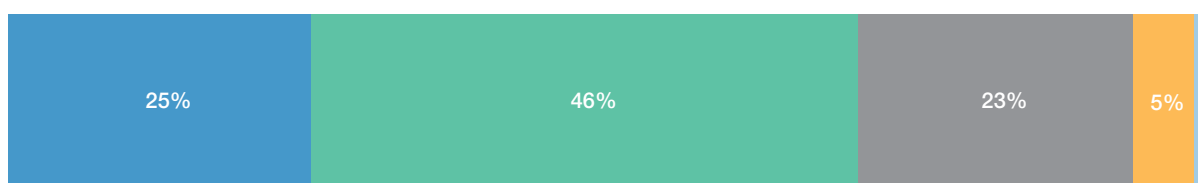


Figure 55

# 6 in 10

(57%) GP practice owners are concerned about the viability of their practice<sup>5</sup>

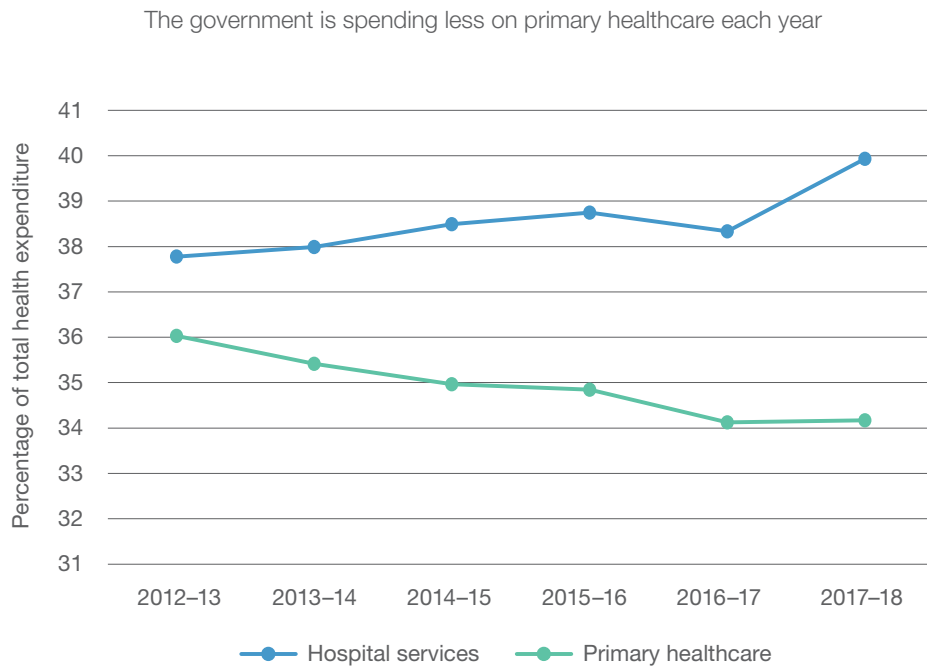


Figure 34

Total government (state/territory and federal government) expenditure on general practice services is approximately

7.5%

of health expenditure<sup>47</sup>



# GP job satisfaction

GPs are satisfied with their level of responsibility, variety in their work, their colleagues, their hours and recognition

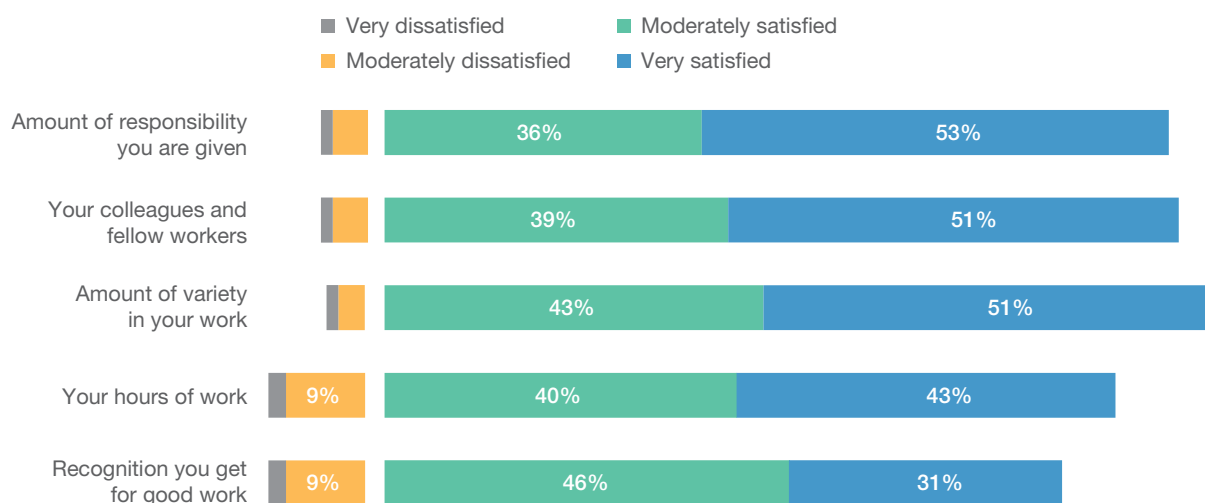


Figure 55

90%

of GPs report that they are satisfied, or very satisfied, with their work overall<sup>32</sup>

# General practice ownership

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The majority of general practices are owned by GPs.

25% of survey respondents were **practice owners**<sup>5</sup>

46% of practice owners were **female**<sup>5</sup>

54% of practice owners were **male**<sup>5</sup>

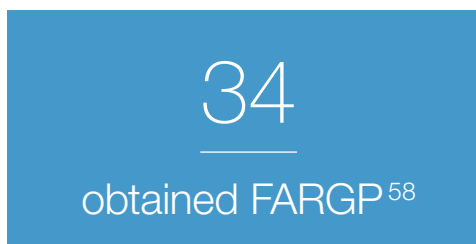
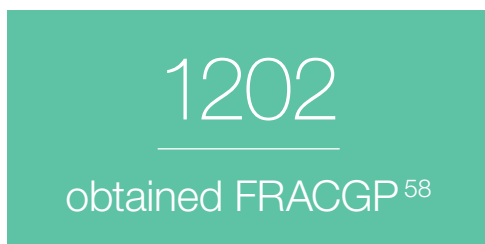
83% of practice owners were **aged ≥45 years**<sup>5</sup>

17% of practice owners were **aged ≤44 years**<sup>5</sup>

## The future GP workforce

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In 2019



In 2020



\*Representing 2.7% of total domestic students – an increase from 265 in 2014 (1.8% of total domestic students).

Eligible applications for the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) Program has declined by 17% since 2015, while the number of Australian medical graduates has increased by 20%.

**View the [full report](#) for full details and references.**