

Read Later 0 Your profile Logout



CLICK FOR PATIENT HANDOUTS
Healthy infant eating patterns

Home News Opinion How to Treat Clinical Education Smart Practice Seminars Jobs Pain Video

Rural Doctor The Fallout: Hiroshima Magazine HTT Year Book Patient Handouts ebooks Sponsor a Seminar

Search Australian Doctor

Home / News / News Review /



Tweet G+1 0 Like 6

Find out what gap fees GPs will charge if the freeze continues

Paul Smith | 25 May, 2016 | 0 comments Read Later

ELECTION 2016

If you are thinking about an election strategy to gently sail your party ship to victory, it may not be the best idea to suddenly start firing broadsides at the much-loved system meant to provide patients universal access to medical care.

But that is what Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull did with his Budget promise to extended the Medicare rebate freeze into the next decade.

Related:

- *'Gasp of air to a drowning man', GP describes pledge to lift freeze*
- *Govt hacks \$1 billion from Medicare*

There has been a heated political row during the election campaign on its likely effects — whether bulk-billing will collapse, whether patients will walk away from GP care, whether Medicare itself is doomed.

Here, we offer the views of doctors on the frontline from our own survey of 510 GPs on the issue.

In short, half believe bulk-billing will collapse, half believe practices in poor communities will become unviable. See the graphs below for more details.

Subscribe to the Newsletter

- ✓ Breaking news
- ✓ A daily must-read for GPs
- ✓ Delivered to your inbox

By clicking subscribe now you agree to our [privacy policy here](#).

SUBSCRIBE NOW

★ Today's Top Picks

Quiz: The vomiting infant

GP training can't rely on goodwill alone

Join a medical defence organisation that has your best interests at heart...

Freecall 1800 011 255

MDA National
Support Protect Promote

MDA National Limited ABRN 67 055 801 771 A0035

Advertisement

MELBOURNE

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons – Skills Laboratory

EARN 40 CAT1 CPD POINTS

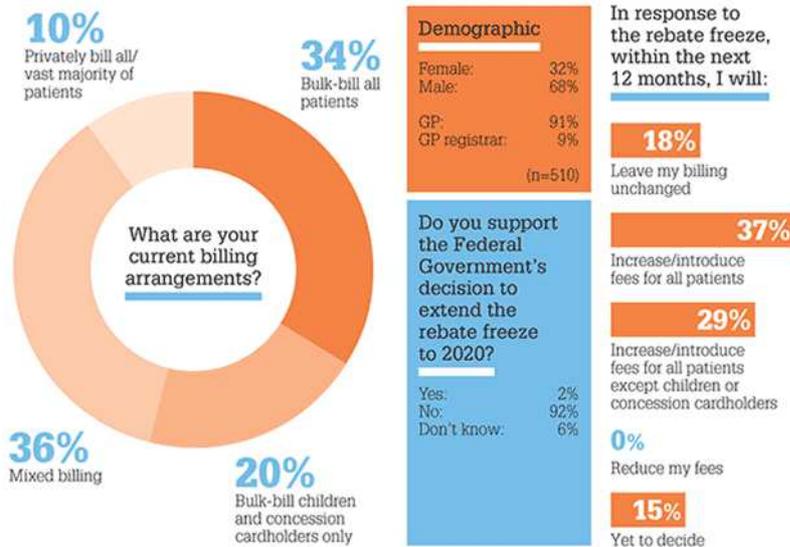
Advertisement

Latest Poll

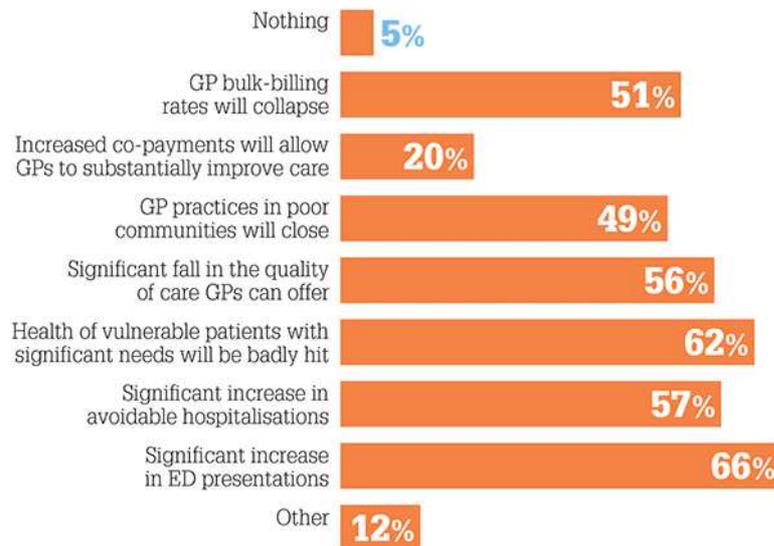
Will you follow the RACGP's call and not refer to chiros?

Click to vote

Comments	Most read
<p>awfulpod</p> <p>Oh, I suspect they get it - the "60c per consultation" is just for public consumption . . .</p> <p>GPs only losing 60 cents per consult under freeze, says PM · 12 hours ago</p>	



What will be the main effects of the extended Medicare freeze on general practice (you can choose more than one)?

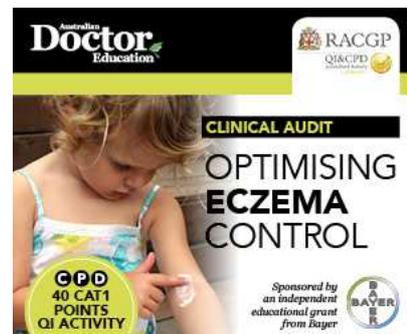


John Smith
I had cases where patients lied to me about not getting S8 meds from others. It took me significant amount of unpaid time and effort to...
Banned patient fails in \$20,000 compensation bid against GP clinic · 13 hours ago

Dr Jim
I have NEVER referred to snake oil merchants of any ilk. Unfortunately I have seen too much horse manure treatments which have resulted in...
Will you follow the RACGP's call and not refer to chiros? · 13 hours ago



Advertisement

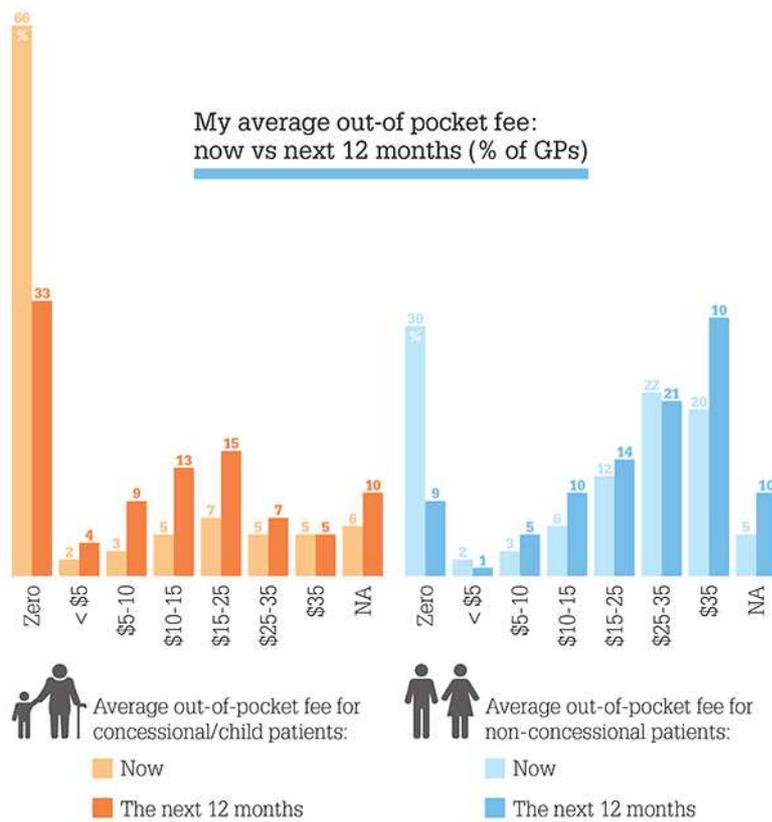


Advertisement



Advertisement





- General Practitioner VR (FRACGP/ACCRM)...**
25/05/2016

- PERTH - VR GP - 70% MIXED BILLING / \$15...**
25/05/2016

- Antimicrobial Stewardship Pharmacist**
25/05/2016

- Pharmacist - Compounding**
25/05/2016

- GP in Melbourne**
24/05/2016

- GP in Cairns**
24/05/2016

- Locum Pharmacist**
24/05/2016

- [View more jobs >>](#)

In the federal election, which party will you vote for?	
Coalition:	16%
Labor Party:	20%
Greens:	13%
Nationals:	8%
Other party:	12%
I will not vote:	8%
No answer:	29%

We also asked GPs to describe their reaction when they heard the freeze would be extended. Here is just a small selection of the 430 comments you made.

- "Frustrating and seems like deranged priorities — taking money from health and education while spending it on useless, expensive military equipment, and housing people in inhuman off-shore detention centres."

- "No surprise, when bulk-billing rates are so high."

- "Outrageous and incredibly naive. It'll just shift the problem to the hospital system at a vastly higher cost, which primary care/preventative care could have contained."

- "Gutless attempt to introduce co-payment."

- "The government is taking a lend of the good nature of GPs who try to do the best for their patients. They are cost shifting an expense onto our shoulders, and want the complaints to be against us ... It is another way of devaluing our community service."

- "Angry that government feels they can walk all over GPs again and again and not expect a backlash. Angry at the intention to dismantle Medicare."

- "I have already had to close my long-running practice and join a group to keep my head above water."

- "Attempted destruction of the social fabric that keeps Australia a fair, just and safe place to live."

"Horrified and concerned at the effect this decision may have on the long-term viability of Aboriginal Health Services."
"Absolute shock ... Who else in the current workforce would tolerate a wage freeze, especially when doctors have to add on all the extras costs — bandages, dressings ointments — at no cost to a patient."
"Good thing. Patients should have to pay. This stops doctors taking advantage of the Medicare system. Medical services should never be cheaper than a haircut."
"I do not bulk-bill and this freeze reinforces my desire to be uncoupled from the shackles of Medicare."
"I am very angry, disappointed and disillusioned. As a lifelong Liberal voter, this is the final straw."
"Astounded that the government would choose to damage the most cost-effective part of the health system."
"I want to retire as I can no longer practise what I believe in: good quality universal healthcare for all."
"It had to occur — bulk-billed medicine is a scam."
"Inexperienced political decision without involving people at a grassroots level. To make any economy sustainable, you need to make the primary and preventive healthcare strong, rather than pumping money to tertiary care."
"I would like all GPs to form a united front — to increase fees as a general rule or to strike. It seems that drastic measures are the only ones that the government will take notice of."

Read more about:

« Previous | Next »

Medicare, Medical politics, Remuneration, Budget2016

Related Articles

 <p>Exclusive: Freeze will cost GPs \$50,000 in 2019 4 May, 2016 87</p>	 <p>What do GPs really think of the MBS rebate freeze? 18 May, 2016 10</p>	 <p>There's an election coming and GPs must speak out 18 May, 2016 12</p>
---	--	---

Please log into DISQUS to leave a comment by clicking on the blue 'D' icon below. If you are not yet registered with DISQUS then please sign up below. Thanks

0 Comments [Australian Doctor](#)  Login ▾

 Recommend  Share Sort by Newest ▾



Be the first to comment.

 Subscribe  Add Disqus to your site [Add Disqus](#) [Add](#)  Privacy