

Health services

Health service use and access

Between 1997 and 2007, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over with private health insurance (43.1 per cent to 50.9 per cent). The significant increase was among males (46.0 per cent to 53.7 per cent) and females (40.8 per cent to 48.6 per cent), among persons in all except the fifth or most disadvantaged quintile, and among persons in the urban and rural health areas.

Between 1997 and 2007, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over who had difficulties getting health care when needing it (7.7 per cent to 12.0 per cent). The significant increase was among males (7.7 per cent to 11.6 per cent) and females (7.6 per cent to 12.3 per cent), among persons the third quintile (5.6 per cent to 12.2 per cent), and fourth quintile (11.6 per cent to 16.6 per cent) and fifth quintile (8.6 per cent to 13.1 per cent) of disadvantage, and among persons in the rural health areas (9.2 per cent to 17.3 per cent).

Emergency department presentations

Between 1997 and 2007, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over who presented to an emergency department on 1 or more occasions in the last 12 months (12.8 per cent to 17.7 per cent). The significant increase was among males (14.5 per cent to 19.2 per cent) and females (11.5 per cent to 16.5 per cent), among persons the first quintile (9.8 per cent to 15.8 per cent), and third quintile (12.7 per cent to 18.8 per cent) and fifth quintile (12.9 per cent to 18.4 per cent) of disadvantage, and among persons in the urban and rural health areas.

Between 1997 and 2007, there has been no significant change in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over who rated their emergency department care positively, as excellent or very good or good.

Hospital admissions

Between 1997 and 2007, there has been no significant change in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over who were admitted to hospital on 1 or more occasions in the last 12 months. However, there has been a significant increase among persons in the urban health areas (20.2 per cent to 24.3 per cent).

Between 1997 and 2007, there has been no significant change in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over who rated their hospital care positively, as excellent or very good or good.

General practitioner visits

Between 1997 and 2007, there has been no significant change in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over who visited a general practitioner in the last 2 weeks.

Between 1997 and 2007, there has been no significant change in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over who visited a general practitioner in the last 12 months. However, there has been a significant increase among persons in the fifth or most disadvantaged quintile (91.3 per cent to 95.3 per cent), and among persons in the urban health areas (92.3 per cent to 94.5 per cent).

Public dental services

Between 2002 and 2007, there has been no significant change in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over who attended a public dental service in the last 12 months.

Community health centres

Between 2002 and 2007, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of persons aged 65 years and over who attended a community health centre in the last 12 months (5.4 per cent to 7.4 per cent). The significant increase was among females (6.0 per cent to 7.8 per cent), among persons in the fourth quintile of disadvantage (5.1 per cent to 8.9 per cent), and among persons in the rural health areas (6.6 per cent to 9.3 per cent).