

Service System Needs

The 2021/22 – 2023/24 Health Needs Assessment has identified numerous health and service issues in the Brisbane North community that relate to the difference levels of the healthcare system, or elements that contribute to the system in functioning or providing quality care. These needs are listed below:

Service Issues

- ✓ After hours
- ✓ Chronic pain
- ✓ Complex and chronic care
- ✓ Coordination and integration
- ✓ Cost of care
- ✓ GP care
- ✓ Health literacy
- ✓ Service capacity
- ✓ Palliative care
- ✓ Service navigation
- ✓ Tele- and digital health
- ✓ Workforce

LEGEND:

Relative rank for prioritised needs:



Service Issues

Overall Prioritisation Rank

After Hours



- **Medicare-subsidised services:** In 2018–19, a total of 463,806 after hours GP services were provided to 234,735 patients residing in the PHN region. This indicates that over 22% of the population accessed after hours GP or medical deputising service.
- **Emergency departments:** In 2018–19 there were a total of 83,267 ED presentations that were triaged as low acuity. Of these low acuity presentations, over 48% (or 40,644 presentations) occurred during the after hours period.
- **13 HEALTH:** The most frequent after hours users of 13 HEALTH are identified as being for young children (0 to 4 years of age) accounting for 30.5% of phone calls, followed by adults aged 25 to 34 years (17.8 %).

Chronic Pain



- **Risk factors:** Older females, those with long-term conditions, those who stay long in hospital and those who report limitation to daily activities are more likely to experience chronic pain.
- **Conditions:** Nationally, the following health conditions are associated with higher rates of chronic pain in 2016: arthritis (61.4%), high blood pressure (48%), other long-term health condition or long-term injury (39.4%), mental health condition (24.8%) and osteoporosis (24.1%).
- **Drugs and medication:** Nationally, people with chronic pain were 3 times more likely to have opioids and other analgesics dispensed, than in those without chronic pain. Opioid and cannabis use related to pain is further explored in the HNA.

Complex and chronic care



In 2019–20 there were 333,963 chronic disease or complex care management services provided by GPs in Brisbane North. In total, persons aged 45+ years received 70% of total chronic disease or complex care management services. Trend in accessing these services from GPs peaks in the 65–74 year cohort.

- **Coordination of Health Care Study:** Survey responses in this study potentially demonstrate aspects of poorer coordinated, patient-centred, and holistic care in the management or treatment of complex and chronic conditions.
- **Potentially preventable hospitalisations:** People aged 65 years and above accounted for 10,383 hospital admissions for potentially preventable conditions. This equates to 8,175.2 admissions per 100,000 people and is higher than the national and Queensland rate of 6,842.2 and 7,675.4 admissions per 100,000 respectively.

Coordination and integration



The consistent lack of coordination and integration across specific health areas throughout apparent across nearly all health areas in the HNA, including children’s health, alcohol and other drugs, mental health, and care for older people. There is consistent evidence of a lack of communication between service among providers between public and private systems, in addition to within and between primary and tertiary care.

Service Issues	Overall Prioritisation Rank
<p>Cost of care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare services: in 2016–17, 54.7% of residents incur out-of-pocket costs for non-hospital Medicare services and pay an average cost of \$163. These incurred costs are higher than the 49.8% of Australians who pay an average out-of-pocket cost of \$139 and 48.1% of metropolitan residents who pay an average of \$150. • Bulk-billed GPs: In 2016–17, 80.5% of all GP attendances were bulk-billed in the Brisbane North region, compared to 85.7% nationally. This has gradually increased from 77.4% in 2013–14. • GP attendances and diagnostic imaging services: A greater proportion of Brisbane North residents pay out-of-pocket costs compared to Australia (33.8% vs 23.5% respectively), while fewer or comparable proportions of Brisbane North residents pay for specialist and obstetric services to Australia (71.9% and 44.2% respectively). 	
<p>GP Care</p> <p>GP attendances have steadily increased between 2016–17 to 2019–20. On average in 2019–20 a Brisbane North resident saw a GP 7.1 times a year. This an increase from an average of 5.6 GP attendances in 2013–14.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher GP attendances are demonstrated in areas of lower socioeconomic status (SES) or regional areas and, lower GP attendances are observed in the higher SES or inner city areas. This trend has persisted from previous years. <p>Quality Improvement Measures: Brisbane North GPs performed poorer in 7 measures in comparison with Australia.</p>	
<p>Health literacy</p> <p>The 2018 Health Literacy Survey found that majority (89%) of Australians found it easy or usually easy to discuss health concerns and actively engage with their healthcare providers. Further, 25% of people strongly agreed that they felt socially supported in managing their health, and a 26% of people found it always easy to navigate the healthcare system. Of those who reported lower or poorer perceptions of managing or navigating the healthcare system were people with three or more long-term health conditions or very high levels of psychological distress</p>	
<p>Service capacity</p> <p>A range of services have seen a steady average annual growth in the region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and other drug treatment services: 2.6% increase, since 2015–16. • Mental health (MBS subsidised) services: 4.9% increase, since 2015–16. • Aged care services: 12.8% increase, since 2016. • Total GP attendances: 3.3% increase, since 2015–16. 	
<p>Palliative care</p> <p>There was identified need for experienced palliative care nurses, and education for family and carers, as well as greater access to home/hospice based palliative care that supports a person's preferred place of dying.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2020, there were 17 medical practitioners with a primary specialist of "palliative medicine. Other health practitioners who reported this as their job area consisted of 151 nurses and 3 physiotherapists. 	
<p>Service navigation</p> <p>Consultation frequently raised the challenges and ongoing barriers associated with service navigation. Community members believed they were not knowledgeable of the services available or lacked the support needed to seek out appropriate care. Similarly, GPs and practitioners expressed poor experiences with navigation of services, and its impact on the referral pathways of patients. These challenges were not exclusive to one health need, but across many health areas.</p>	
<p>Tele- and digital health</p> <p>In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation and greater accessibility of services through tele- and digital health has been important in supporting the wellbeing of the Brisbane North community. Between March to August in 2020, 30% of GP attendances across Australia were delivered digitally. Attendances for other medical practitioners, specialists, obstetrics and allied via telephone and video-conference accounted for 26%, 22%, 11% and 19% of total attendances respectively.</p>	

Workforce



As of 2020, Brisbane North had a total of 226,232 health practitioners employed and working in a registered profession. Nurses and midwives contributed majority (54%), while medical practitioners contributed to 17.5% of the total workforce. At an SA3 level, it is apparent that the distribution of the workforce is not equitable, nor account for populations with higher health and service needs.

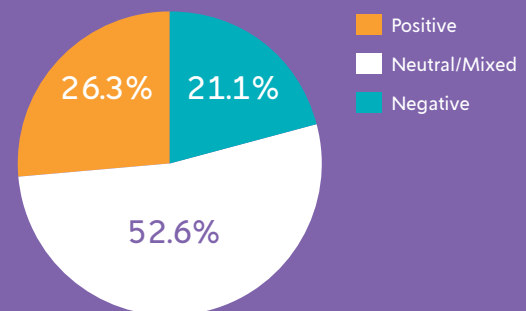
General practitioners:

- In 2019–20 there were a total count of 2,293 GPs in Brisbane North of whom 46.7% are female.
- Of this total count there were 1,322.4 full time equivalents (FTE), 42.4% of whom are female.
- Majority (614.9 FTE) or 46.4% of GPs are aged between 40–54 years. A further 34.5% (or 456.6 FTE) are above 55 years.

Consultation – Community members

“Of the 106 community members who were asked about how they preferred to use telehealth in the future:

- 21.1% of responses were negative
- 52.6% were neutral or mixed
- 26.3% were positive.”



“Difficult to access My Aged Care systems.”

“The system is not always equal in its servicing of folk in Moreton Bay. There are varying conversations where folk speak of accessing care, and finding it different in different towns in the Moreton Bay region.”

“Obesity supports services and prescription drug addiction services, and improved coordination of across health services and systems. Private and public health systems and services.”

Consultation – Partnership groups

“Young people are increasingly being put on waitlists but never hear back from the service”

“Need for better “integration” for youth AOD and youth mental health services. The “dual diagnosis” agenda that has moved through the adult system has not been implemented in the youth sector”

“Ensuring a combined workforce which enables the person [with suicidal thoughts] to be supported by someone who has lived their experience, whilst obtaining specialist clinical help if warranted, is essential.”