



CommBank GP Insights 2024

Restoring practice vitality

The latest edition of CommBank GP Insights finds that confidence across the sector is improving amid signs of easing pressures and ongoing practice optimisation. As practices target growth, they are prioritising strategies to create capacity, meet patient expectations, and drive efficiencies and productivity.

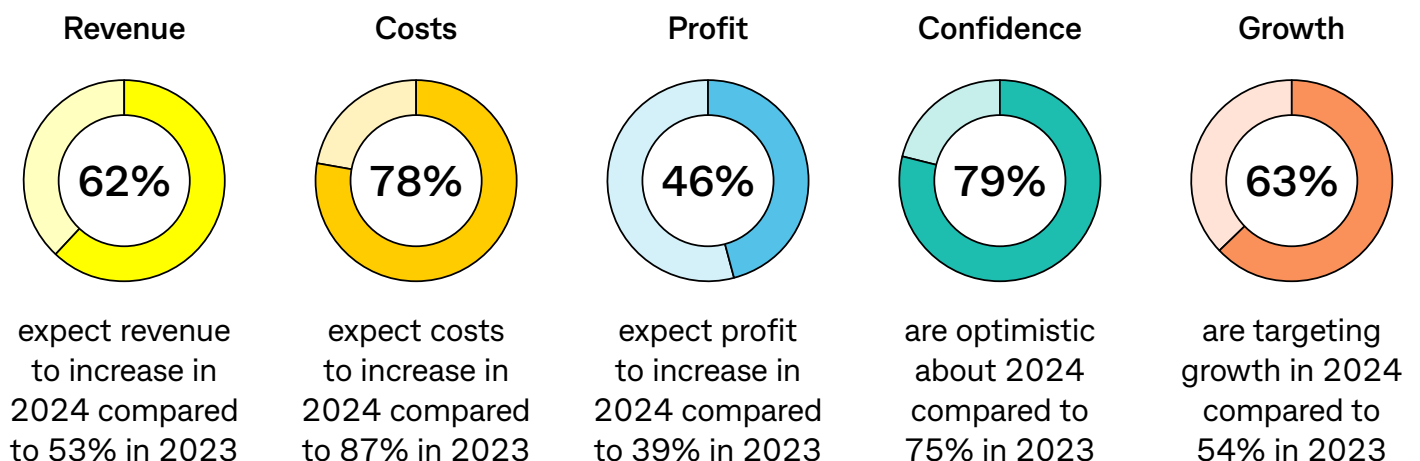


About GP Insights

This edition focuses on changing practice economics and billing, workforce issues and technology adoption and how this impacts patient and provider experiences. The report is based on a survey of 204 general practices across Australia.

Early signs of turning point as outlook improves

Most practices anticipate rising patient numbers and revenue in the next year. While cost pressures are forecast to remain, the rate of increases may be slowing. This is expected to help more practices maintain margins, supporting a moderate uplift in optimism and a greater focus on growth.



Capitalising on a growth mindset

Despite the prospect of easing pressure, practices see elevated costs that outpace Medicare schedule fees as a challenge for the year ahead. Attracting and retaining talent and managing patient expectations also feature. In response, practices are prioritising the expansion of teams and services and continuing to shift billing models and rationalise costs.

Top practice priorities for the next 12 months



50%

Increase the number of healthcare professionals



49%

Change billing model to reduce bulk billing



45%

Expand range of services offered by GPs

People, patients, and practice costs

Practices are implementing a range of initiatives to support their recruitment and retention efforts, ensure patients can easily find the practice and offset rising costs.



Expanding capacity

79%

of practices say they are experiencing a shortfall of GPs

Top focus area

1. Flexible work arrangements (61%)
2. Nurturing a friendly and supportive culture (49%)
3. Employing more registrars (35%)



Attracting patients

63%

of practices expect higher patient numbers in the next year

Top focus area

1. Referrals from family and friends (89%)
2. Appointment reminders (89%)
3. Practice websites (88%)



Navigating costs

73%

of practices say increasing costs is a challenge

Top focus area

1. Changing billing models to reduce bulk billing (66%)
2. Increasing fees (65%)
3. Reducing overheads or debt (46%)



Did you know?

Many practices express concerns about changing payroll tax obligations, including lack of clarity, time-consuming processes, and unforeseen liabilities. As a result of recent rulings, one in two practices say they have, or will, introduce a model of patients paying GPs directly.

Digital dividends

Technology investment intentions have rebounded after declining in recent years, with a range of digital solutions earmarked for adoption or modernisation. These include a focus on data-driven technologies and upgrading the cyber security defences.

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| Technology investment intentions | 74% | Expect to increase investment in technology in next 12 months |
| Top area for technology upgrade | 48% | say cyber security systems and protocols that protect data need upgrading |
| Top area of planned adoption | 38% | plan to adopt data-driven tools to optimise performance in next two years |
| Top area of interest for data analysis | 48% | would like to use data analytics to conduct external benchmarking |
| Top AI application of interest | 78% | would consider using AI for data analysis and intelligence |



Did you know?

More than four in 10 practices identify a need to upgrade payments technology. The most in-demand features are integration with practice management software, speed of taking payments and claims and a digital-first experience.

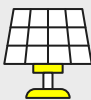
Focus on sustainability

Across the sector, 52% of practices say they have a moderate or strong focus on sustainable healthcare; however, many believe the industry could be doing more. Adoption of sustainable initiatives within the practice continues, with the fastest-growing activities expected to include:



43%

Source more sustainable products



41%

Increase the use of renewable energy



40%

Use biodegradable sterilisation and cleaning solutions

About the CommBank GP Insights Report

The report is based on a quantitative survey of 204 decision-makers and senior influencers at general practices across Australia. This included 100 business owners and 104 practising physicians.



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