



CommBank Patient Experience Insights

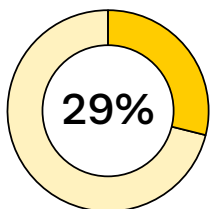
Leaving no one behind on their healthcare journey

The inaugural *CommBank Patient Experience Insights report* confirms that some Australians face greater challenges accessing affordable care than others. In response, they are adopting behaviours that can both help and hinder health outcomes.

By enhancing non-clinical aspects of the patient experience, healthcare providers have an opportunity to empower patients and their teams to make a difference. The report explores how.

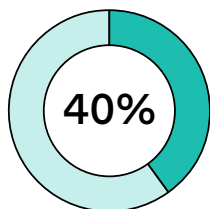
A view of health equity

Compared to recent years, respondents are feeling less healthy and chronic conditions are rising. The quality of care on offer is unquestioned by most patients, but many don't know how to find the care they need and encounter access and affordability barriers. This is particularly prominent for Generation X.



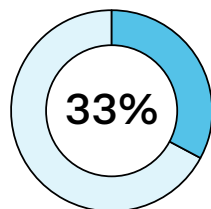
of people rate their health as poor or fair, up from 16% in 2020

Health issues highest among Gen X



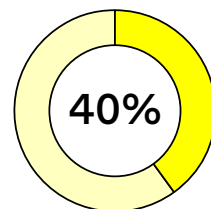
rate affordability of health services as poor or fair

Affordability issues highest among Gen X



rate accessibility of health services as poor or fair

Accessibility issues highest among Gen X



aren't confident navigating the health system to get care

Confidence lowest among Gen Z

Patient experience obstacles

Affordability barriers prompt good and bad habits

Amid cost of living pressures, most Australians are taking action to reduce healthcare spending. The most common are preventative measures - adopting healthier lifestyles to avoid doctor visits. However, the number of patients skipping consultations and treatments is all too common. Patients are postponing appointments due to cost and access issues. Alongside elevated fees, long wait times, travel and difficult booking processes were prohibitive.



71%

are reducing healthcare spending due to cost of living pressures

Spending cut-backs highest among Gen Y



39%

are making lifestyle improvements to avoid consultations

Lifestyle improvements highest among Gen X



71%

are encountering hurdles in finding providers with available appointments and paying for services

Appointment postponements highest among Gen Z

Traversing a complex health system

Less than one in five Australians strongly agree they know how to navigate the healthcare system to find the care they need. Some also find specific aspects of their health journey complicated, including payments and claims. However, the research shows patient support for the enablers of a more integrated, connected experience, including secure data sharing and provider communication.

Enhancing patient experiences

Technologies that improve patient interactions

Most patients believe the technologies used by practices enhance their overall healthcare experience. Patients are using a range of digital tools, with appointment reminders, booking systems and telehealth some of the more commonly adopted. Widespread health monitoring through wearables and devices and the use of My Health Record also underscores the importance of health data to patients.



75%

use SMS and email appointment reminders

Usage of appointment reminders highest among Pre-boomers



70%

use fitness wearables and health monitoring devices

Usage of wearables highest among Gen Y



59%

use online booking systems

Usage of booking systems highest among Gen Z



Simpler options to find and book appointments

Patients are using multiple methods to find providers, including referrals from other practitioners, family, and friends. However, websites, online searches and directories also rank highly. When booking an appointment, phone calls are still the first choice on average, but younger patients are as or more likely to be using digital, self-assisted options.

Addressing delicate payment challenges

Affordability and access concerns are translating to appointment no-shows, but when they do visit, most patients encounter issues with paying for and claiming health services. The top-rated is bill shock, but others include confusion, and delays around fees and rebates.



33%

bill shock due to unexpected charges or out-of-pocket expenses

Bill shock highest among patients of medical specialists



31%

lack of clarity about consultation fees

Lack of clarity highest among patients of GPs



25%

confusion about Medicare rebates and bulk-billing

Confusion highest among patients of GPs



Demand for instant processing of payments and claims

Most patients now expect Medicare and private health insurance claims to be processed on the spot (78%) and would prefer not to wait to be reimbursed (72%).

Finding the right applications for AI-assisted tools

While patient comfort with artificial intelligence varies by use case and generation, people are generally more comfortable with non-clinical uses. This includes using AI for appointment scheduling or summarising medical notes, whereas fewer people are comfortable with AI-assisted diagnoses. Generations Z, Y, and X tend to be more comfortable than older generations.

About the CommBank Patient Experience Insights Report

The underlying research is based on an online survey of 1,127 patients who have consulted with at least one of either a general practitioner (90%), dentist (62%), medical specialist (56%), or allied health provider (42%) in the past 12 months. The survey was completed in October 2023.



The *CommBank Patient Experience Insights report* explores patient preferences and expectations when engaging with health providers. It is designed to identify opportunities to improve the patient and provider experience, with a focus on the non-clinical aspects of delivering care.

For more information about CommBank Health's specialist teams, solutions for health providers and professionals and industry insights, contact 1800 222 484 or visit www.commbank.com.au/healthcare

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