

# CommBank Insight Series 2026

Household spending on  
Health Services in Australia



**Can**

# Insights to help you adapt and grow

The 2026 CommBank Health Insights Report is designed to help healthcare businesses better understand spending trends and respond to emerging opportunities in their areas of practice.

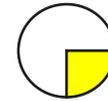
In this edition, we place a spotlight on a number of sectors where spending growth reflects resilient demand and evolving consumer behaviours. While spending has increased across all these sectors, the pace of growth varies by location, age and channel. In many sectors, demographic change and digital adoption are key drivers.

Our conversations with healthcare businesses confirm the industry is responding to change. Continued investment in digital health initiatives, modern facilities and improved patient and workforce experiences are helping build capacity and efficiency in these areas of care.

We remain focused on supporting the industry's long-term development, and these insights are just one way we help health businesses as they adapt and grow.



**Peter Girvan**  
Head of CommBank Health



## Why the insights matter

Pinpointing changes in healthcare spending and patient preferences can help businesses adapt and make better decisions.



## The data we use

De-identified healthcare transactions from approx. 7 million Australians, scaled to represent the population.



## The sectors we spotlight

Spending on medical specialists, dental services, pharmacies, allied health providers and veterinarians.



## What the data tells us

Shifts in how much people pay, how often they visit, the channels they spend in and demand signals across sectors.

# Strategic questions that could reshape practice operations in 2026

Consumer health spending is rising across Australia. Beneath headline growth, the drivers of demand and patient behaviours are shifting, with implications for practice performance, non-clinical operations, and strategic planning.



## Are price or patient numbers driving growth?

### ★ Key insight

In several sectors, spend per visit is contributing more to growth than visit frequency. This points to changes in service mix, case complexity, purchasing preferences or pricing, rather than volume alone.

### 🕒 Practice implications

Revenue growth may not reflect stronger demand. Pricing, service mix, and operational efficiency can have as much bearing on margins as patient numbers.



## Are my digital capabilities keeping up?

### ★ Key insight

Spending through digital channels continues to expand across many sectors. Patients increasingly expect convenience across booking, payments and communication, alongside in-person care.

### 🕒 Practice implications

Improving digital capability can influence patient flow, retention and operating efficiency, particularly at key access and transaction points.



## Am I set to capture and service emerging demand?

### ★ Key insight

Spending growth is increasing faster for some age groups than others across service types. Demographic shifts appear to be influencing both service mix and depth of demand.

### 🕒 Practice implications

Sustainable growth can depend on how well capacity, resourcing and patient experiences are organised around patient cohorts and demand patterns.

# Insights from CommBank's Australian Economics Team

In 2025, Australian households rebuilt savings and strengthened balance sheets, supporting a rise in consumer spending after the challenging cost of living period. The improvements in consumer spending, together with help from public spending and business investment, helped the economy end last year in a resilient position. However, persistent inflation and an economy growing above its potential capacity prompted the Reserve Bank of Australia to lift interest rates in February and March 2026.

We expect interest rates to move higher to help pull down inflation and bring the economy back into balance. The rise of geopolitical uncertainty does add another risk factor. We do expect an impact on both household incomes and consumption but see limited implications for the resilient parts of household consumption, such as health, given the structural factors influencing its growth.

A growing and ageing population, alongside a heightened focus on health and wellness, is supporting health spending. This is translating into sustained demand for health goods and services.

The outlook for household spending will be crucial to the outlook for the economy, inflation and interest rates. Household spending has been incredibly resilient over 2025, and any easing would come from a higher base.



**Belinda Allen**

Head of Economics – Australia  
Commonwealth Bank

## Things you should know:

The information presented in this section is extract of Global Economic and Markets Research (GEMR) Economic Insights reports. GEMR is an independent business unit of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia ABN 48 123 123 124 AFSL 234945. This extract provides only a summary of the named reports. Please go to <http://www.commbankresearch.com.au> to access the full report.

The information is not investment research and nor does it purport to make any recommendations. Rather, it is for informational purposes only and is not to be relied upon for any investment purposes.

This extract has been prepared without taking into account your objectives, financial situation (including your capacity to bear loss), knowledge, experience or needs. It is not to be construed as an act of solicitation, or an offer to buy or sell any financial products, or as a recommendation and/or investment advice. You should not act on the information contained in this extract or named report. To the extent that you choose to make any investment decision after reading this extract and/or named report you should not rely on it but consider its appropriateness and suitability to your own objectives, financial situation and needs, and, if appropriate, seek professional or independent financial advice, including tax and legal advice.



# A spotlight on health services

Patient spending trends and implications for providers

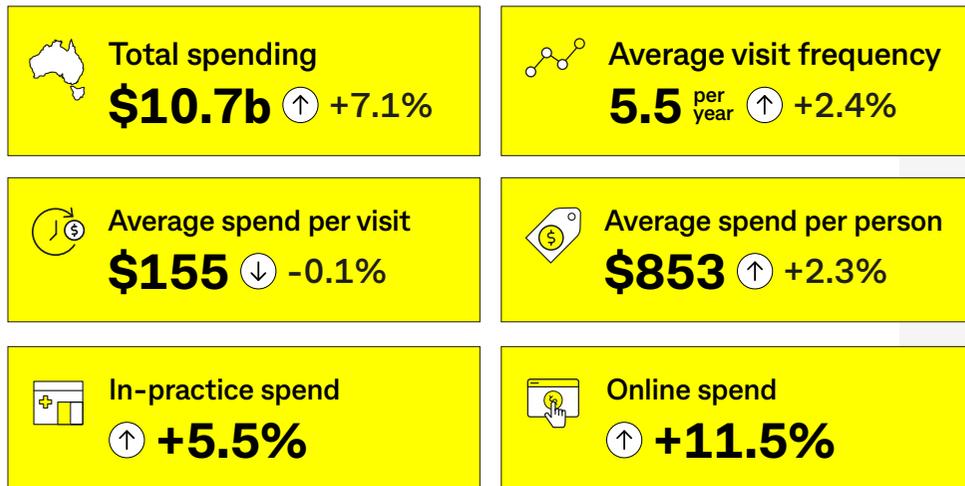


# Medical specialists in focus

“More Australians are seeking specialist care more regularly, signalling an expansionary phase for this sector. Supporting this growth will require operational efficiency, capacity planning and, in some cases, access to funding.”

Nina Krstic  
Executive Manager Health, Commercial Business Banking,  
NSW, CommBank

## Spending benchmarks

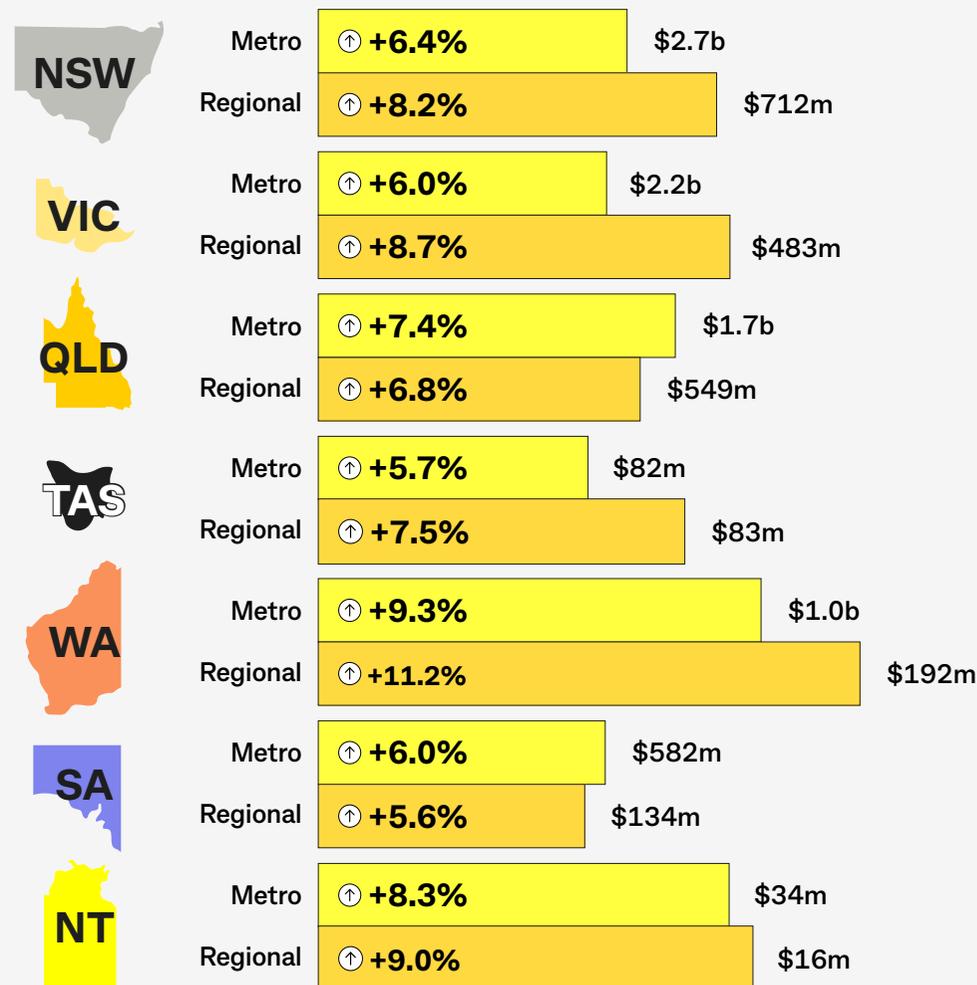


More Australians visited medical specialists in the past year, and more regularly. With no change in the average amount they spent per visit, it was this volume that helped drive overall spending higher.

The growth in payments for online consultations was faster than in-practice, signalling higher adoption of telehealth services among specialist patients. Younger patient spending was also at or near the national average and the growth rate for regional areas was higher in most states and territories.

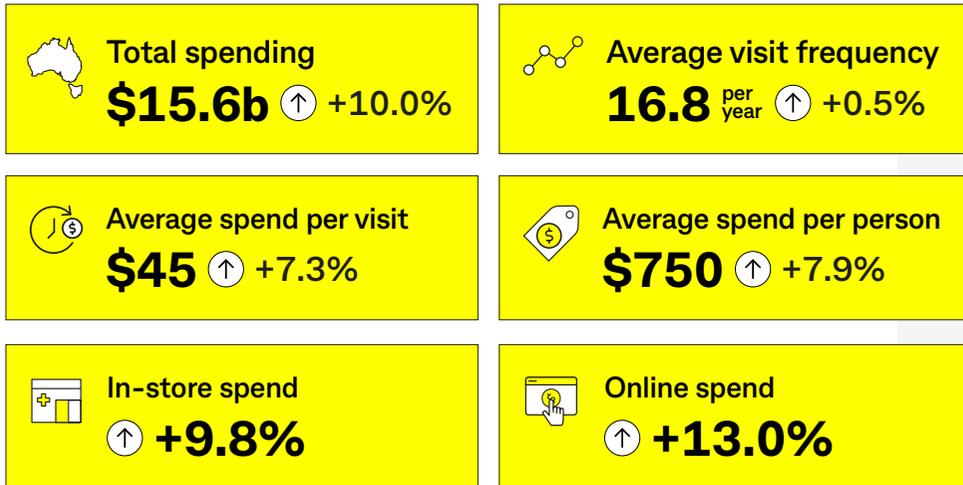
\*All figures are for the 12 months to 31 January 2026 or compared with the same prior annual period.

## Change in spending on medical specialists by location\*



# Pharmacies in focus

## Spending benchmarks



Spending on pharmacies, which covers dispensary and retail goods, grew faster than any other health sector. Online purchasing accelerated, outpacing in-store spending. Although a smaller proportion than in-store, more Australians spent online and more frequently in the past year. In many states and territories, including New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, regional online spending was higher than in metro areas.

Age groups between 35 and 65 were the most likely to spend more on pharmacy than their younger and older counterparts. This pattern likely reflects a heightened focus on personal health during mid-life, supporting demand for both prescription medicines and wellbeing-related products.



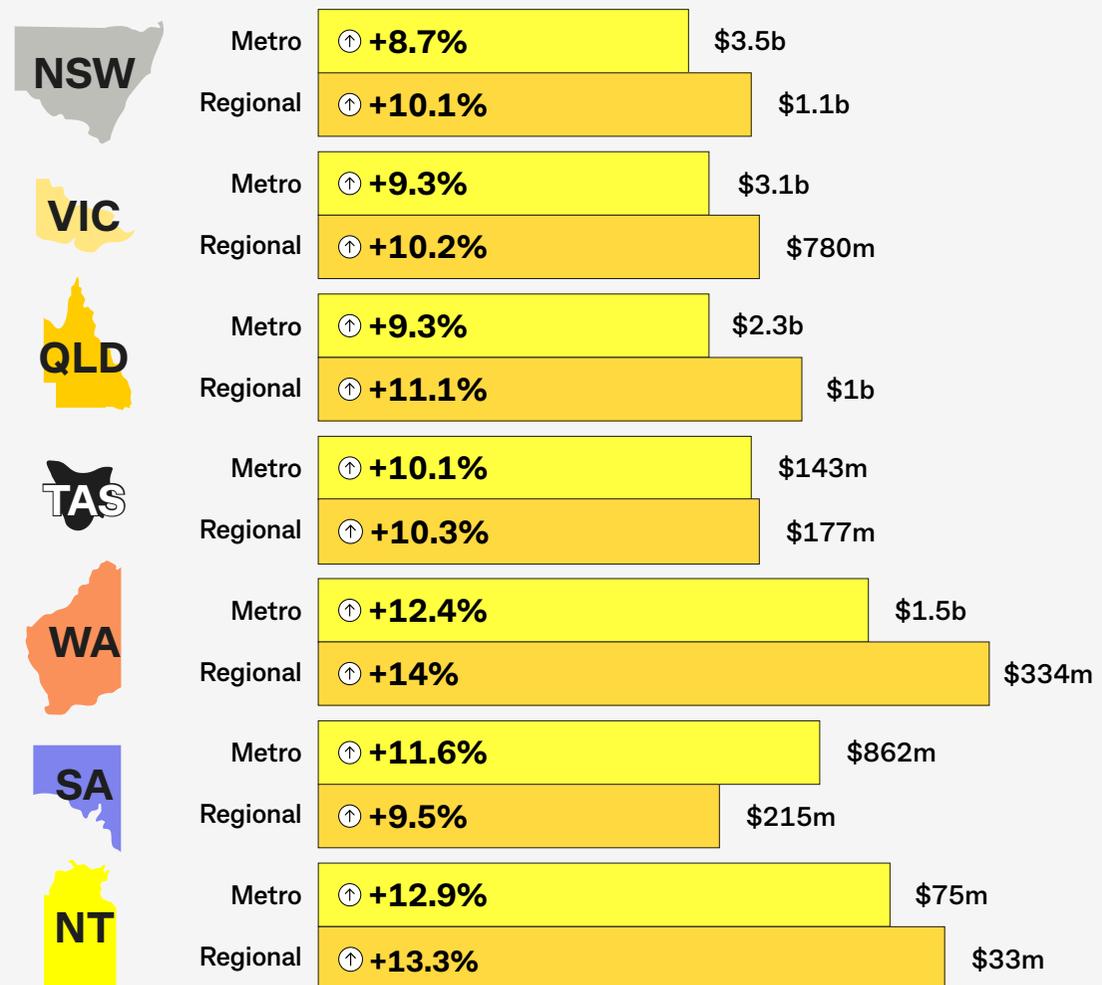
### Policy outlook

The PBS co-payment reduction lowers out-of-pocket costs per script and may affect transaction values and volumes.

“Pharmacies continues to show significant year-on-year growth, and online payments, particularly in regional and rural areas are rising fast. Having the ability to take digital payments from remote customers anywhere has become non-negotiable to capturing this growth.”

Maria Christina  
Executive Manager Health, Commercial Business Banking, SA, CommBank

## Change in spending on pharmacies by location\*



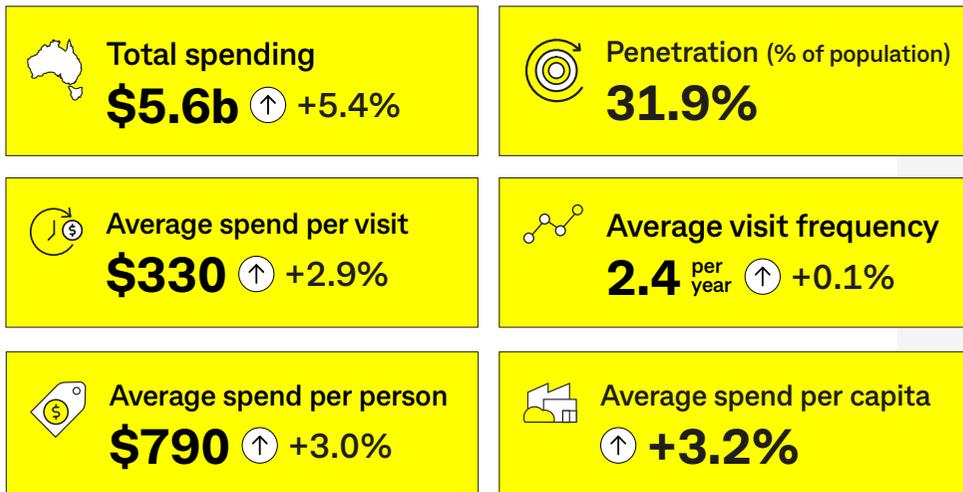
\*All figures are for the 12 months to 31 January 2026 or compared with the same prior annual period.

# Dental services in focus

“Rising dental spending is about more than just higher costs; it signals increased patient engagement with oral health. As demand for dental services grows, the clinics that enhance patient experiences, from digital interactions to modern equipment, will be well placed to capture growth.”

Tennille Barry  
Executive Manager Health, Commercial Business Banking, QLD, CommBank

## Spending benchmarks



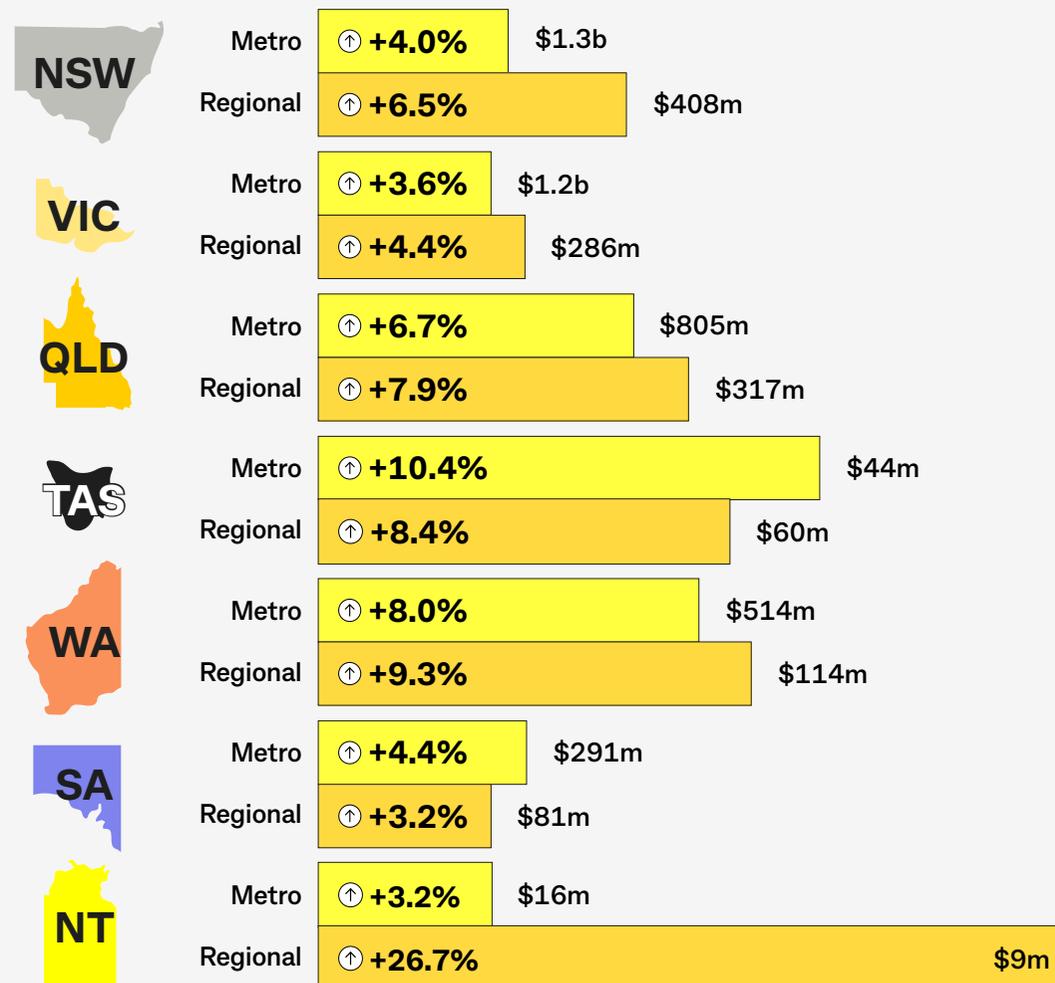
Spending on dental services rose steadily over the past year, while the number of patients and the frequency of visits remained practically unchanged. This was driven by a moderate uplift in the average amount per visit.

While year-on-year spending grew fastest for over-65s, under-24s also spent at a higher rate than the national average. This age group also led spending growth in January 2026.

Regional Northern Territory and Western Australia recorded the highest growth rates across the country, while regional Queensland recorded the highest growth among the larger eastern seaboard states.

\*All figures are for the 12 months to 31 January 2026 or compared with the same prior annual period.

## Change in spending on dental services by location\*



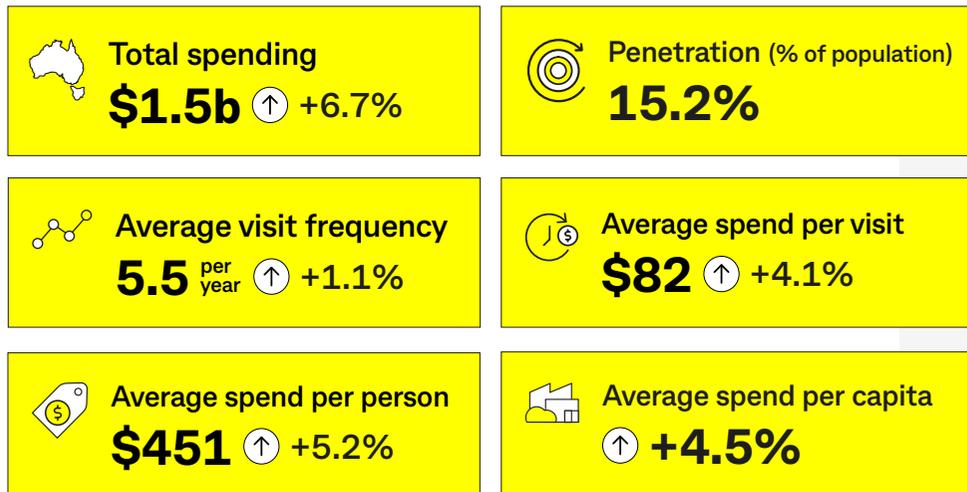


# Allied health in focus

"Allied health spending continues to build momentum, particularly among younger Australians. Practices tell us patient expectations extend well beyond quality care and include convenient and connected digital experiences, straightforward payments, claiming and modern facilities."

Riccardo Soccio  
Executive Manager Health, Commercial Business Banking, VIC,  
CommBank

## Spending benchmarks



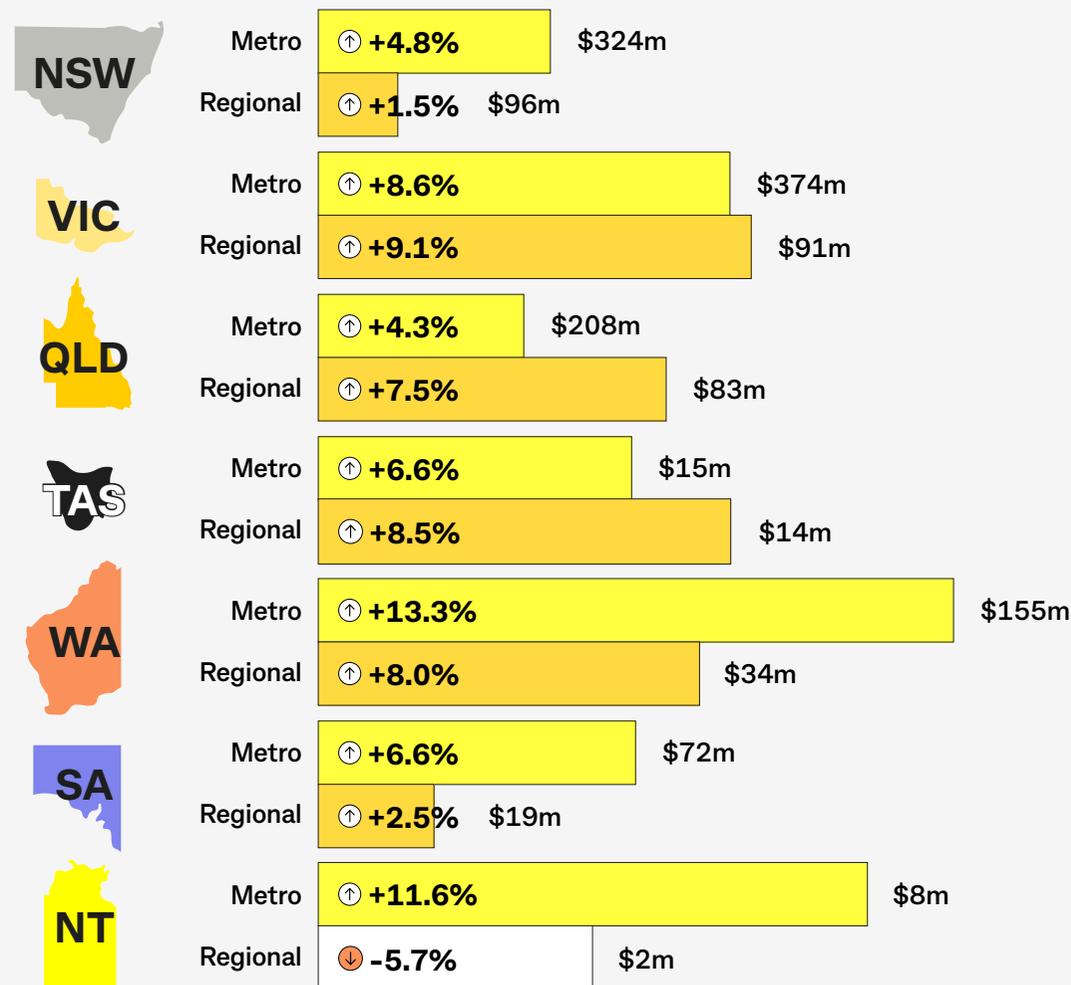
Australians increased their spending on physiotherapy, chiropractic and osteopathic services, visiting more regularly and spending more each time than a year earlier.

With the exception of 18-24 year olds, whose spending increased by 6%, the rate of spending increased with age. 25-34 year olds saw just 1% growth year-on-year, then climbing by age group with over 75s increasing spending by 17%.

Across the country, Victorians in regional areas and Western Australians in metro areas led the uptick in spending.

\*All figures are for the 12 months to 31 January 2026 or compared with the same prior annual period.

## Change in spending on allied health by location\*



# Animal health insights

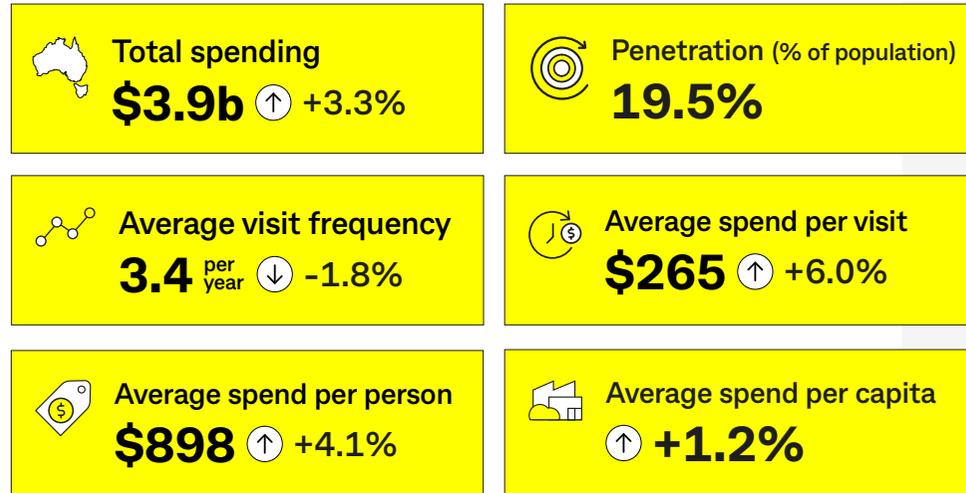


# Veterinarians in focus

“The lift in veterinary spend per visit reflects a shift towards more advanced, higher value care. Balancing larger transaction flows with continued investment in the latest facilities and equipment is an increasing focus for practices.”

Kristy Yow  
Executive Manager Health, Commercial Business  
Banking, WA, CommBank

## Spending benchmarks

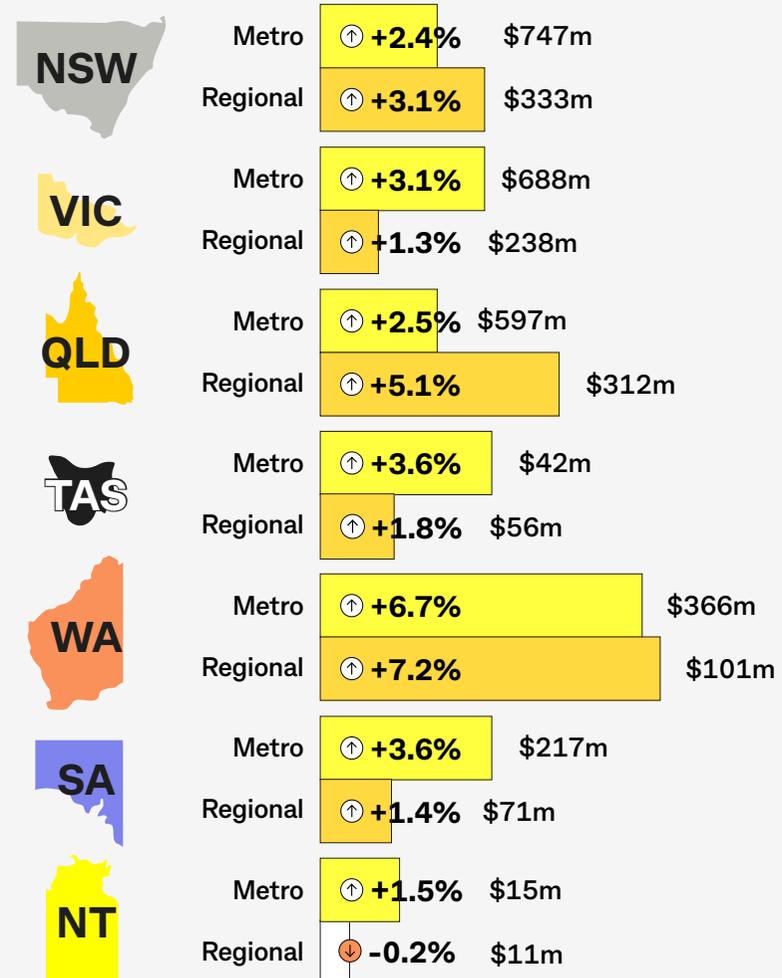


Almost one in five Australians made a veterinary purchase in the past year, spending almost \$900 on average during the 12 month period. That is the second highest level of average annual spend per person for any health service, behind only health insurance.

While the frequency of purchases moderately declined, the spend per visit rose. Western Australia and regional Queensland set the pace for spending growth across the country.

\*All figures are for the 12 months to 31 January 2026 or compared with the same prior annual period.

## Change in spending on veterinarians by location\*



# About CommBank Health

Smarter, simpler banking - built for healthcare.

CommBank's national team of specialist healthcare bankers understand your industry and support businesses across Australia.

Our tailored banking solutions grow with you, from streamlining payments and financing business expansion to purchasing a property.

## Here's how we can help:



### Smarter payments experiences

Simplify health payments and claims, reach customers and boost productivity.



### Flexible business lending

Launch, grow or modernise your healthcare business with financing that suits your needs.



### Personal finance solutions

Fund training to advance your career or access healthcare-exclusive home lending.



### Deep industry knowledge

Access specialist healthcare bankers in metro and regional locations across Australia.

Talk to CommBank Health about how we can help support your healthcare business.



Schedule a call with a CommBank Health Banker **1800 222 484**



To book a call back visit **[www.commbank.com.au/healthcare](http://www.commbank.com.au/healthcare)**

### Things you need to know

CommBank Health partnered with CommBank iQ to produce the Health Insights report. All data is sourced from CommBank iQ, that uses Australia's largest transactional dataset to evaluate spending behaviours. This includes online and in-store transactions from approximately 7 million Australians.

This analysis is based on CommBank iQ data covering spending in nine healthcare sectors from 01 February 2025 to 31 January 2026 and the same prior period. These sectors include: dental services, medical specialists, pharmacies, physiotherapists, chiropractic services and osteopaths, and veterinarians. All figures are spend per customer unless otherwise stated.



This Advanced Analytics Report (Report) is provided by CommBank iQ, a joint venture between Commonwealth Bank of Australia ABN 48 123 123 124 (Commonwealth Bank) and The Quantum Group Pty Ltd and is based on information available at the time of publishing.

The Report is confidential and is provided to you on the condition that you will not disclose its contents to any third parties other than your directors or employees, without the prior written consent of CommBank iQ. This obligation will not apply if the information is available to the public generally (except as a result of a breach of a confidentiality obligation) or you are required to disclose it by law. The Report is provided subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Engagement letter and Standard Terms and Conditions.

CommBank iQ has taken reasonable steps to ensure that the information in this Report is correct and any opinions, conclusions or recommendations are reasonably held or made as at the time of its compilation but no warranty is made as to accuracy, reliability or completeness.

To the extent permitted by law, neither Commonwealth Bank and its subsidiaries (Commonwealth Bank Group) nor The Quantum Group Pty Limited and its affiliates (Quantum) accept liability to you or any person for loss or damage arising from the use of this Report. The contents of this Report should not be relied upon by you or any third party in making business or other decisions. This Report is not a substitute for professional advice.

Any opinions, conclusions or recommendations in this Report are subject to change without notice and CommBank iQ is under no obligation to, and does not, update or keep current the information contained in this Report.

The Report has been prepared for informational purposes only and does not take into account the objectives, financial situation or needs of any particular person. For this reason, any person should, before acting on the information in this Report, consider the appropriateness of the information, having regard to their objectives, financial situation and needs and, if necessary, seek appropriate professional advice.

This Report is not directed to, or intended for distribution to or use by, any person or entity who is a citizen or resident of or located in any locality, state, country or other jurisdiction where such distribution, publication, availability or use would be contrary to law or regulation or which would subject the Commonwealth Bank Group to any registration or licensing requirement within such jurisdiction.

This Report may contain proprietary data of Commonwealth Bank that is sourced from Commonwealth Bank's internal systems and may include, but is not limited to, credit card transaction data, merchant facility transaction data and applications for credit. This Report may also include the data from third parties which have been matched to Commonwealth Bank data. Whilst Commonwealth Bank takes reasonable steps to ensure that its proprietary data is accurate as at the time of compilation of this report, Commonwealth Bank makes no representation or warranty as to the completeness of the data, as it may not reflect all trends in the market. Any reliance on this information is at your own risk.

Any Commonwealth Bank customer data used or represented in this Report is anonymous and de-identified before analysis and is used and disclosed in accordance with the Commonwealth Bank Group's [Privacy Policy Statement](#). By receiving a copy of this Report you acknowledge and agree that you will not use, manipulate or interpret the information to identify any individual or entity.

All material presented in this Report, unless specifically indicated otherwise, is under copyright to the Commonwealth Bank Group. None of the Report, its content, nor any copy of it, may be altered in any way, transmitted to, copied or distributed to any other party, without the prior written permission of the Commonwealth Bank.

Commonwealth Bank maintains policies and procedures designed to minimise the risk that officers and employees are influenced by conflicts of interest and improper disclosure of confidential information.