

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

NOTICE OF MOTION

Johnathan Davis MLA: I give notice that I shall move—That this Assembly:

1. Notes that:
 - a. General Practitioners (GPs) are the most used healthcare service by Australians;
 - b. The ACT has a lower rate of bulk billing GPs than other Australian states and territories;
 - c. Data for 2021-22 from the Federal Department of Health and Aged Care shows that:
 - i. The ACT has the lowest proportion of patients that are always bulk billed at 37.6%, compared to a national average of 64.3%;
 - ii. The ACT has the highest proportion of patients who are never bulk billed at 20.6%, compared to a national average of 7.1%;
 - iii. The ACT has a higher than national average proportion of patients who are sometimes bulk billed, at 18.7% compared to 8.2%;
 - d. A higher than average proportion of patients bulk billed 'sometimes' may indicate that patients in the ACT are more likely to be bulk billed at the discretion of their GP depending on their particular circumstances;
 - i. Many patients rely on a GP's good will and understanding of their individual circumstances, such as poverty or financial hardship, in order to access services at a bulk billed or an affordable reduced rate;
 - e. Data from Cleanbill shows that the ACT has the lowest proportion of clinics who bulk bill all patients at 5.5% and the highest out of pocket costs, compared to other states and territories;
 - f. The ACT and other jurisdictions are experiencing a cost of living crisis that is exacerbating existing inequalities and seeing an increasing number of people slipping into precarity and poverty;

- g. Across Australia, data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics from 2021-22 showed that of people who felt they needed to see a GP, 28% delayed or did not see a GP:
 - i. 3.5% of people delayed or did not seek care because of cost;
 - ii. Other reasons include that services required were not available, wait times were too long, and people experienced a dislike or fear of the service;
 - iii. 80% of people have a preferred GP but 33% of people could not see their preferred GP on one or more occasion;
- h. Increasing access to primary healthcare such as General Practice decreases pressure on, and the cost of managing, public tertiary healthcare, such as emergency hospital presentations.

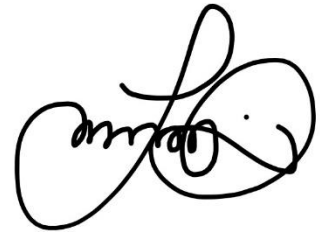
2. Further notes that:

- a. Transparent and centralised sources of information can help people identify and access services that are affordable and appropriate for their needs;
- b. A number of online resources provide centralised and transparent information to healthcare consumers:
 - i. Cleanbill is a free consumer directory of General Practice clinics and includes information such as price, comparison to average cost in the area, clinic billing practices, and whether clinics are taking new patients;
 - ii. Health Direct includes a service finding feature for GPs and other health services, billing practice and practitioner names;
 - iii. Hot Doc includes information on clinic billing practices, practitioner names, specialties and languages spoken, and includes an online booking feature;
- c. Increasing the use of platforms that provide transparent and centralised information could improve access to healthcare for people in the ACT, particularly vulnerable cohorts, by making it easier for people to find services that fit their needs.

3. Calls on the ACT Government to:

- a. Continue working with the Federal Government to improve access to bulk billing General Practice services in the ACT;
- b. Explore the value of services, including but not limited to Health Direct, Cleanbill and Hot Doc, that provide varying degrees of centralised and transparent information about healthcare services, including by raising these services with Health Ministers from other states and territories;
- c. Consider ways to:

- i. Promote the use of these services;
 - ii. Increase healthcare consumer use of these services;
 - iii. Increase General Practice clinic participation in these services; and
- d. Report back to the Assembly by the last sitting week in February 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johnathan Davis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Johnathan Davis MLA

26 June 2023