

# 6 Medicare-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents information on *Medicare Benefits Schedule-subsidised mental health-related services* provided by psychiatrists and allied health professionals – psychologists, social workers and occupational therapists.

Australia's universal health care system, Medicare, comprises three main elements designed to provide access to different types of health services. The Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) provides access to medical, including diagnostic, services; the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) provides access to medicines; while through the Australian Health Care Agreements (AHCAs) with the states and territories, the Australian Government contributes to public hospital services. MBS-subsidised mental health-related services provided by general practitioners are covered in Chapter 2. PBS-subsidised mental health-related prescriptions are covered in chapters 9 and 11, and hospital services are covered in a number of other chapters.

This chapter includes the number and types of services provided by psychiatrists and allied health professionals under the MBS and the characteristics of people who received these services. Note that a person may access more than one type of MBS-subsidised mental health service during the reporting period; each service is counted separately in the counts of services presented in this chapter.

The benefits paid by Medicare Australia are based on the MBS (DoHA 2007a). The schedule allocates a unique item number to each service, and indicates the scheduled payment.

The scope of this chapter has been expanded from the 2004–05 edition to encompass the new allied health MBS items introduced on 1 November 2006 as part of the Australian Government contribution to the COAG National Action Plan on Mental Health (COAG 2006b). This package, entitled *Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and GPs through the MBS*, was designed to improve access to, and better teamwork between, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, GPs and other allied health professionals, including occupational therapists and social workers. (The GP items in this package are covered in Chapter 2.) Also covered are relevant MBS items introduced on 1 July 2004 as part of the *Enhanced Primary Care Program* which extended Medicare to a range of allied health services, including psychologists and other mental health workers, for patients with chronic conditions and complex care needs.

The data presented in this chapter refer to MBS-subsidised mental health services processed in the 2006–07 financial year. For comparison purposes, data are also presented from 2001–02 to 2005–06. More detailed information on the scope and coverage of the data presented in this chapter is provided in Appendix 1.

People who access MBS-subsidised psychiatrist services may have been referred to a psychiatrist or allied health professional by a GP for the specialised management of mental health-related conditions. As described in Chapter 2, 10.9 of every 100 mental health-related problems managed by general practitioners in 2006–07 were managed by a referral being provided, with the most common referral being to a psychologist (3.6 per 100 mental health-related problems managed) or to a psychiatrist (1.9 per 100). Prior to the introduction of the Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and GPs through the MBS package the

trend of referrals was the reverse, with referrals to psychiatrists outnumbering referrals to psychologists.

### **Key concepts**

**MBS-subsidised mental health-related services** are services provided by a psychiatrist or an allied health professional (psychologists, social workers and occupational therapists) on a fee-for-service basis that are partially or fully funded under Medicare and as listed in Table 6.3. Note that electroconvulsive therapy can be provided by either a psychiatrist or another medical practitioner.

**Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioners through the MBS** is a package of new MBS items introduced on 1 November 2006 to improve access to, and better teamwork between, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, GPs and other allied health professionals. Comprises three subgroups:

- GP Mental Health Care Plans (covered in Chapter 2)
- Psychological Therapy Services (claimable by clinical psychologists)
- Focussed Psychological Strategies (Allied Mental Health) (covering general psychologists, occupational therapists and social workers).

The **Enhanced Primary Care Program** is a program introduced on 1 July 2004 to provide access to specific allied health services for patients with chronic conditions and complex care needs being managed by their GP under an Enhanced Primary Care plan. The two MBS items listed under this program which relate specifically to mental health are:

- item 10956 – services provided by a mental health worker (includes psychologists, mental health nurses, occupational therapists, social workers and Aboriginal health workers)
- item 10968 – services provided by a psychologist.

The MBS-subsidised mental health services cover patient attendances (or consultations) provided in different settings as well as other services, such as preparation and review of mental health care plans, group psychotherapy, case conferencing and electroconvulsive therapy. The types of services covered in this chapter relate to specific MBS item codes (as shown in Table 6.3) and as described below:

- **Attendances:** in this chapter, the data on patient attendances have been presented according to provider type (psychiatrist, psychologist, occupational therapist and social worker) and setting, including consulting rooms, hospitals and other locations (such as for home visits).
- **Other services:** data are also presented in this chapter on the following services funded under the MBS:
  - group psychotherapy;
  - interview of a person other than a patient;
  - telepsychiatry (that is, use of communications technology in the provision of psychiatric services);
  - case conferencing;
  - electroconvulsive therapy;
  - psychological therapy services; and,
  - focussed psychological strategies (allied health).

More details on the specific MBS items can be found in the *Medicare Benefits Schedule book* (DoHA 2007a). Note that for items 300–370 (MBS Group A8) and 855–866 (Case Conference – Consultant Psychiatrist), only medical practitioners who are recognised as psychiatrists for the purposes of the Health Insurance Act are eligible to provide services attracting an MBS subsidy. For Medicare payments to be made on items in MBS Group M6 (Psychological Therapy Services) and MBS Group M7 (Focussed Psychological Strategies (Allied Mental Health)) the provider (psychologist, occupational therapist or social worker, as appropriate) must be registered with Medicare Australia as meeting the credential requirements for provision of the service.

In addition to the information on the MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied mental health services presented in this chapter, other information about psychiatrists and allied mental health providers is included in this report as follows:

- mental health-related medications prescribed by psychiatrists and subsidised under the PBS/RPBS are outlined in Chapter 11;
- information on the psychiatrist and mental health nurse workforce is presented in Chapter 13; and,
- data on expenditure on both MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied mental health services, and PBS/RPBS subsidised mental health-related prescriptions are detailed in Chapter 14.

Note also that some of the services covered in this chapter (such as electroconvulsive therapy and in-hospital services) are also included in other parts of this publication.

MBS-subsidised mental health-specific services provided by GPs are covered in Chapter 2.

## **6.2 People accessing MBS-subsidised mental health services**

Overall, in 2006–07, an estimated 272,228 people (or 1.3% of the Australian population) received MBS-subsidised psychiatrist services. Thus, on average, around one in every 77 Australians was provided with one or more of these MBS-subsidised psychiatrist services in 2006–07.

During this period, 1,986,533 MBS-subsidised psychiatrist services were provided, an average of 7.3 services per patient (Table 6.1).

During 2006–07, and mainly between November 2006 and June 2007, an estimated 164,912 people (or 0.8% of the population) received MBS-subsidised allied health services, covering both the Enhanced Primary Care items and the Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and GPs through the MBS items. As the latter items were only introduced on 1 November 2006, the data for 2006–07 do not comprise a full year's operation of these allied health items. The number of MBS-subsidised allied health services provided was 668,902, an average of 4.1 services per patient.

Females used the psychiatrist services subsidised through the MBS to a greater extent than males, making up more than half (54.6%) of the patients and averaging 8.1 services each (compared with 6.3 services per male). The number of female patients per 1,000 population (14.2) was also higher than that for males (11.9).

In 2006–07, 42.7% of patients were aged 35–54 years and accounted for almost half (47.0%) of all MBS-subsidised psychiatrist services.

**Table 6.1: People receiving MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services: patient demographic characteristics and services received, 2006–07<sup>(a)</sup>**

Patient demographics	Number of patients	Per cent of patients	Patients per 1,000 population <sup>(b)</sup>	Number of services	Per cent of services	Services per patient
<b>Psychiatrist services</b>						
<b>Age (years)</b>						
Less than 15	10,046	3.7	2.5	37,721	1.9	3.8
15–24	34,321	12.6	11.8	209,656	10.6	6.1
25–34	46,272	17.0	15.9	332,546	16.7	7.2
35–44	58,182	21.4	18.9	454,689	22.9	7.8
45–54	58,052	21.3	20.1	478,204	24.1	8.2
55–64	39,922	14.7	17.4	310,914	15.7	7.8
65+	25,433	9.3	9.3	162,803	8.2	6.4
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	123,560	45.4	11.9	781,998	39.4	6.3
Female	148,668	54.6	14.2	1,204,535	60.6	8.1
<b>Total psychiatrist items</b>	<b>272,228</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>1,986,533</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>7.3</b>
<b>Allied health services</b>						
<b>Age (years)</b>						
Less than 15	12,474	7.6	3.1	46,468	6.9	3.7
15–24	23,101	14.0	8.0	91,120	13.6	3.9
25–34	35,482	21.5	12.2	147,007	22.0	4.1
35–44	38,740	23.5	12.6	161,059	24.1	4.2
45–54	29,984	18.2	10.4	124,460	18.6	4.2
55–64	17,587	10.7	7.7	71,232	10.6	4.1
65+	7,544	4.6	2.8	27,556	4.1	3.7
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	54,355	33.0	5.2	214,975	32.1	4.0
Female	110,557	67.0	10.5	453,927	67.9	4.1
<b>Total allied health items</b>	<b>164,912</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>668,902</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>

(a) Allied Health items were introduced on 1 November 2006 so data are not for a full year.

(b) Crude rate based on the preliminary Australian estimated resident population as at 31 December 2006.

Source: Medicare Benefits Schedule data (DoHA).

Psychiatrist services were accessed at a rate of 96 services per 1,000 population (Table 6.2). This figure varied substantially when analysed by area of residence; from a high of 113.2 services per 1,000 in major cities, down to 18.8 services per 1,000 population in very remote areas. There were 66.7 psychiatrist services per 1,000 in inner regional areas, while rates in outer regional and remote areas were similar (40.5 and 43.8 services per 1,000 population, respectively).

Access for allied health services as a whole was similar in major cities and inner regional areas (33.2 and 33.6 services per 1,000 population, respectively). Rates were lower in outer regional and remote areas (25.0 and 22.4 services per 1,000 population, respectively), while service utilisation rates in very remote areas were substantially lower, at 5.3 services per 1,000 population (Table 6.2).

**Table 6.2: People receiving MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services: patient area of residence and item group<sup>(a)</sup> of services received by remoteness area, 2006–07<sup>(b)</sup>**

Patient area of residence	Patients			Services			Services per patient
	Number of patients	Per cent of patients	Rate (patients per 1,000 population) <sup>(c)</sup>	Number of services	Per cent of services	Rate (services per 1,000 population) <sup>(c)</sup>	
<b>Psychiatrist services</b>							
Major cities	204,970	75.3	14.5	1,604,281	80.8	113.2	7.8
Inner regional	45,330	16.7	11.1	272,340	13.7	66.7	6.0
Outer regional	16,044	5.9	8.2	79,493	4.0	40.5	5.0
Remote	3,000	1.1	9.4	13,959	0.7	43.8	4.7
Very remote	847	0.3	5.0	3,208	0.2	18.8	3.8
Unknown/Migratory	2,037	0.7	..	13,252	0.7	..	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>272,228</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>1,986,533</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>96.0</b>	<b>7.3</b>
<b>Allied health services</b>							
<b>Psychological Therapy Services—clinical psychologists</b>							
Major cities	34,908	75.1	2.5	146,561	77.2	10.3	4.2
Inner regional	8,296	17.9	2.0	31,734	16.7	7.8	3.8
Outer regional	2,451	5.3	1.2	8,740	4.6	4.5	3.6
Remote	294	0.6	0.9	958	0.5	3.0	3.3
Very remote	72	0.2	0.4	216	0.1	1.3	3.0
Unknown/Migratory	431	0.9	..	1,737	0.9	..	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,452</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>189,946</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>4.1</b>
<b>Enhanced primary care—registered psychologists</b>							
Major cities	10,993	64.6	0.8	32,061	65.2	2.3	2.9
Inner regional	3,994	23.5	1.0	11,501	23.4	2.8	2.9
Outer regional	1,698	10.0	0.9	4,723	9.6	2.4	2.8
Remote	271	1.6	0.9	707	1.4	2.2	2.6
Very remote	14	0.1	0.1	33	0.1	0.2	2.4
Unknown/Migratory	55	0.3	..	165	0.3	..	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,025</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>49,190</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Enhanced primary care—mental health workers<sup>(d)</sup></b>							
Major cities	958	66.9	0.1	2,543	65.2	0.2	2.7
Inner regional	340	23.7	0.1	999	25.6	0.2	2.9
Outer regional	107	7.5	0.1	288	7.4	0.1	2.7
Remote	21	1.5	0.1	51	1.3	0.2	2.4
Very remote	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	..
Unknown/Migratory	7	0.5	..	22	0.6	..	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,433</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>3,903</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>2.7</b>

(continued)

**Table 6.2 (continued): People receiving MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services: patient area of residence and item group<sup>(a)</sup> of services received by remoteness area, 2006–07<sup>(b)</sup>**

Patient area of residence	Number of patients	Per cent of patients	Rate (patients per 1,000 population) <sup>(c)</sup>	Number of services	Per cent of services	Rate (services per 1,000 population) <sup>(c)</sup>	Services per patient
<b>Focussed Psychological Strategies (Allied Health)—registered psychologists</b>							
Major cities	68,159	65.0	4.8	277,168	68.1	19.6	4.1
Inner regional	24,697	23.5	6.1	88,085	21.6	21.6	3.6
Outer regional	9,800	9.3	5.0	33,795	8.3	17.2	3.4
Remote	1,515	1.4	4.8	5,337	1.3	16.7	3.5
Very remote	232	0.2	1.4	636	0.2	3.7	2.7
Unknown/Migratory	524	0.5	..	2,096	0.5		4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>104,927</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>407,117</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>Focussed Psychological Strategies (Allied Health)—occupational therapists</b>							
Major cities	408	61.8	0.0	1,626	65.0	0.1	4.0
Inner regional	150	22.7	0.0	540	21.6	0.1	3.6
Outer regional	90	13.6	0.0	301	12.0	0.2	3.3
Remote	5	0.8	0.0	9	0.4	0.0	1.8
Very remote	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	..
Unknown/Migratory	7	1.1	..	26	1.0		3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2,502</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>3.8</b>
<b>Focussed Psychological Strategies (Allied Health)—social workers</b>							
Major cities	2,402	60.8	0.2	10,632	65.5	0.8	4.4
Inner regional	1,086	27.5	0.3	4,096	25.2	1.0	3.8
Outer regional	397	10.1	0.2	1,287	7.9	0.7	3.2
Remote	27	0.7	0.1	89	0.5	0.3	3.3
Very remote	4	0.1	0.0	14	0.1	0.1	3.5
Unknown/Migratory	34	0.9	..	126	0.8		3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,950</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>16,244</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>4.1</b>
<b>Allied health services—total</b>							
Major cities	110,697	67.1	7.8	470,587	70.4	33.2	4.3
Inner regional	36,498	22.1	8.9	136,978	20.5	33.6	3.8
Outer regional	13,952	8.5	7.1	49,122	7.3	25.0	3.5
Remote	2,041	1.2	6.4	7,139	1.1	22.4	3.5
Very remote	318	0.2	1.9	904	0.1	5.3	2.8
Unknown/Migratory	1,406	0.9	..	4,172	0.6		3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>164,912</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>668,902</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>4.1</b>

(a) See the Medicare Benefits Schedule data section of Appendix 1 for a listing of these item groups.

(b) Focussed Psychological Strategies (Allied health) items were introduced on 1 November 2006 so data are not for a full year.

(c) Crude rate based on the preliminary Australian estimated resident population as at 31 December 2006.

(d) Covers psychologists, mental health nurses, occupational therapists, social workers and Aboriginal health workers.

.. Not applicable.

Source: Medicare Benefits Schedule data (DoHA).

New South Wales had the highest number of patients for both psychiatrists and allied health professionals but South Australia had the highest number per 1,000 population for psychiatrist items and Victoria for allied health items (Table 6.3). The Northern Territory had a considerably lower number per 1,000 population for patients of both psychiatrists and allied health professionals.

**Table 6.3: People receiving MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services, by item group<sup>(a)</sup> of service provided, states and territories<sup>(b)</sup>, 2006–07<sup>(c)</sup>**

Item group <sup>(a)</sup>	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total <sup>(e)</sup>
<b>Psychiatrist</b>									
Patient attendances – consulting room	84,978	74,254	48,227	20,487	24,234	4,519	3,496	764	260,959
Patient attendances – hospital	5,069	4,512	3,739	1,680	1,031	664	183	21	16,899
Patient attendances – other	2,419	929	212	97	288	26	20	1	3,992
Group psychotherapy	2,327	3,884	562	186	342	294	..	..	7,614
Interview with non-patient	1,174	1,236	1,030	452	337	96	37	7	4,369
Telepsychiatry	156	42	88	13	7	..	..	3	312
Case conferencing	73	235	15	17	37	29	..	..	414
Electroconvulsive therapy <sup>(d)</sup>	483	512	473	191	133	70	..	..	1,876
<b>Total psychiatrist items<sup>(e)</sup></b>	<b>90,312</b>	<b>78,072</b>	<b>49,610</b>	<b>20,865</b>	<b>24,643</b>	<b>4,583</b>	<b>3,421</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>272,228</b>
Rate (per 1,000 population) <sup>(f)</sup>	13.2	15.1	12.0	10.0	15.6	9.3	10.2	3.4	13.1
<b>Allied health</b>									
Psychological Therapy Services—clinical psychologists	15,001	12,743	4,774	8,378	2,841	1,418	708	124	45,987
Enhanced primary care—registered psychologists	6,553	5,095	3,376	558	913	472	150	17	17,134
Enhanced primary care—mental health workers <sup>(g)</sup>	538	379	259	58	191	9	5	1	1,440
Focussed Psychological Strategies—registered psychologists	33,591	35,750	21,644	4,199	4,883	2,206	1,467	304	104,044
Focussed Psychological Strategies—occupational therapists	149	148	110	131	76	38	4	1	657
Focussed Psychological Strategies—social workers	1,383	937	880	289	326	49	35	12	3,911
<b>Total allied health items<sup>(e)</sup></b>	<b>54,213</b>	<b>52,690</b>	<b>29,706</b>	<b>13,073</b>	<b>8,684</b>	<b>3,923</b>	<b>2,194</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>164,912</b>
Rate (per 1,000 population) <sup>(f)</sup>	7.9	10.2	7.2	6.3	5.5	8.0	6.5	2.0	7.9

(a) See the Medicare Benefits Schedule data section of Appendix 1 for a listing of these item groups.

(b) State and territory is based on the postcode of the mailing address of the patient as recorded by Medicare Australia.

(c) Psychological Therapy Services and Focussed Psychological Strategies (Allied Health) items were introduced on 1 November 2006 so data are not for a full year.

(d) Information for electroconvulsive therapy may include data for services provided by medical practitioners other than psychiatrists.

(e) The numbers of patients will not sum to the total, as a patient may receive more than one type of service in more than one state or territory and therefore may be counted in more than one MBS item group and state or territory.

(f) Crude rate based on the preliminary Australian estimated resident population as at 31 December 2005.

(g) Covers psychologists, mental health nurses, occupational therapists, social workers and Aboriginal health workers.

.. Not applicable.

Source: Medicare Benefits Schedule data (DoHA).

## 6.3 MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services

The previous section of this chapter focused on the number of people who received MBS-subsidised mental health services. In this section, the focus is on the number of services provided.

In 2006–07, there were 1,986,533 services provided by psychiatrists and 668,902 services provided by allied health professionals that were subsidised through the MBS. Thus the MBS subsidised a total of 2,655,435 psychiatrist and allied health services. This is equivalent to 127.3 services per 1,000 population (Table 6.4). These services represented 1% of all MBS-subsidised services (257.9 million). The services provided by psychiatrists represented 9.2% of all the MBS-subsidised specialist attendances (21.7 million) provided in that year and were equivalent to a rate of 95.3 services per 1,000 population.

Most of the MBS-subsidised psychiatrist services (84.5%) were attendances provided in consulting rooms, followed by attendances in hospitals (11.4%). Group psychotherapy accounted for most of the other services provided (2.1%).

Victoria accounted for the highest proportion of MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services provided (33.2%), as well as the highest rate (170.8 per 1,000 population) among the states and territories (Table 6.4). New South Wales had the second highest proportion of services provided (31.1%). However, when population size is taken into account, there were more MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services provided in South Australia than in New South Wales (131.9 and 120.3 per 1,000 population, respectively). The Northern Territory had the lowest rate, with 27.8 MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services provided per 1,000 population.

There was a decline in the number of MBS-subsidised psychiatrist services from 2001–02 to 2006–07 at an average annual rate of 1.1% (Table 6.5). However, the introduction of MBS allied health items for people with chronic conditions and complex care needs in July 2004, followed by the uptake of the new MBS items provided by psychologists, occupational therapists and social workers from November 2006, resulted in an increase in the overall number of services subsidised by Medicare for both psychiatrists and allied health professionals to 2,655,435 in 2006–07.



**Table 6.4: MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services, by item group<sup>(a)</sup> of service provided, states and territories<sup>(b)</sup>, 2006–07<sup>(c)</sup>**

Item group <sup>(a)</sup>	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<b>Psychiatrist</b>									
Patient attendances – consulting room	527,866	555,617	286,468	93,853	160,850	30,985	18,968	4,130	1,678,737
Patient attendances – hospital	51,239	69,328	59,579	21,928	13,180	9,172	1,539	202	226,167
Patient Attendances – other	8,637	3,780	755	470	787	59	74	1	14,563
Group psychotherapy	13,764	20,382	3,669	1,151	670	1,908	138	7	41,689
Interview with non-patient	1,671	1,823	1,444	527	446	131	44	7	6,093
Telepsychiatry	347	71	196	23	11	3	1	13	665
Case conferencing	89	412	18	24	49	37	1	7	637
Electroconvulsive therapy <sup>(d)</sup>	4,590	4,648	5,037	1,478	1,444	670	112	3	17,982
<b>Total psychiatrist items</b>	<b>608,203</b>	<b>656,061</b>	<b>357,166</b>	<b>119,454</b>	<b>177,437</b>	<b>42,965</b>	<b>20,877</b>	<b>4,370</b>	<b>1,986,533</b>
Rate (per 1,000 population) <sup>(e)</sup>	88.7	127.0	86.4	57.4	112.6	87.4	62.1	20.6	95.3
<b>Allied health</b>									
Psychological Therapy Services—clinical psychologists	60,306	56,251	17,920	36,114	10,110	5979	2875	391	189,946
Enhanced primary care — registered psychologists	18,718	15,249	9,825	1,631	2,048	1,237	447	35	49,190
Enhanced primary care—mental health workers <sup>(f)</sup>	1,658	1,052	732	152	274	24	10	1	3,903
Focussed Psychological Strategies—registered psychologists	129,114	148,889	81,404	16,783	16,511	8,078	5,236	1,102	407,117
Focussed Psychological Strategies—occupational therapists	574	654	366	409	324	161	13	1	2,502
Focussed Psychological Strategies—social workers	6,179	4,268	3,216	1,177	1,133	158	97	16	16,244
<b>Total allied health items</b>	<b>216,549</b>	<b>226,363</b>	<b>113,463</b>	<b>56,266</b>	<b>30,400</b>	<b>15,637</b>	<b>8,678</b>	<b>1,546</b>	<b>668,902</b>
Rate (per 1,000 population) <sup>(e)</sup>	31.6	43.8	27.5	27.0	19.3	31.8	25.8	7.3	32.1
<b>Total psychiatrist and allied health items</b>	<b>824,752</b>	<b>882,424</b>	<b>470,629</b>	<b>175,720</b>	<b>207,837</b>	<b>58,602</b>	<b>29,555</b>	<b>5,916</b>	<b>2,655,435</b>
Rate (per 1,000 population) <sup>(e)</sup>	120.3	170.8	113.9	84.4	131.9	119.2	87.8	27.8	127.3

(a) See the Medicare Benefits Schedule data section of Appendix 1 for a listing of these item groups.

(b) State and territory is based on the postcode of the mailing address of the patient as recorded by Medicare Australia.

(c) Psychological Therapy Services and Focussed Psychological Strategies (Allied Health) items were introduced on 1 November 2006 so data are not for a full year.

(d) Information for electroconvulsive therapy may include data for services provided by medical practitioners other than psychiatrists.

(e) Crude rate based on the preliminary Australian estimated resident population as at 31 December 2006.

(f) Covers psychologists, mental health nurses, occupational therapists, social workers and Aboriginal health workers.

Source: Medicare Benefits Schedule data (Medicare Australia 2007b and DoHA).

**Table 6.5: MBS-subsidised psychiatrist and allied health services, by item group<sup>(a)</sup> of service provided, 2001–02 to 2006–07<sup>(b)</sup>**

Item group <sup>(a)</sup>	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07	Average annual change (per cent)
<b>Psychiatrist</b>							
Patient attendances – consulting room	1,821,404	1,781,337	1,745,472	1,723,598	1,708,878	1,678,737	–1.6
Patient attendances – Hospital	197,899	205,045	208,996	209,294	225,918	226,167	2.7
Patient Attendances – Other	12,350	12,828	12,128	12,419	13,355	14,563	3.4
Group psychotherapy	49,138	45,078	41,641	40,611	43,797	41,689	–3.2
Interview with non-patient	4,304	4,294	4,301	4,670	4,845	6,093	7.2
Telepsychiatry	..	19	177	228	369	665	n.p.
Case conferencing	..	62	274	545	696	637	n.p.
Electroconvulsive therapy <sup>(c)</sup>	14,937	16,412	15,469	15,853	18,083	17,982	3.8
<b>Total psychiatrist items</b>	<b>2,100,032</b>	<b>2,065,075</b>	<b>2,028,458</b>	<b>2,007,218</b>	<b>2,015,941</b>	<b>1,986,533</b>	<b>–1.1</b>
Rate (per 1,000 population) <sup>(d)</sup>	107.5	104.4	101.3	99.0	98.1	95.3	–2.4
<b>Allied health</b>							
Psychological Therapy Services—clinical psychologists	..	..	..	..	..	189,946	..
Enhanced primary care — registered psychologists	..	..	..	23,092	45,541	49,190	n.p.
Enhanced primary care—mental health workers <sup>(e)</sup>	..	..	..	748	2,730	3,903	n.p.
Focussed Psychological Strategies—registered psychologists	..	..	..	..	..	407,117	..
Focussed Psychological Strategies—occupational therapists	..	..	..	..	..	2,502	..
Focussed Psychological Strategies—social workers	..	..	..	..	..	16,244	..
<b>Total allied health items</b>	..	..	..	<b>23,840</b>	<b>48,271</b>	<b>668,902</b>	<b>n.p.</b>
Rate (per 1,000 population) <sup>(d)</sup>	..	..	..	1.2	2.3	32.1	n.p.
<b>Total psychiatrist and allied health items</b>	<b>2,100,032</b>	<b>2,065,075</b>	<b>2,028,458</b>	<b>2,031,058</b>	<b>2,064,212</b>	<b>2,655,435</b>	<b>n.p.</b>
Rate (per 1,000 population) <sup>(d)</sup>	107.5	104.4	101.3	100.2	100.4	127.3	n.p.

(a) See the Medicare Benefits Schedule data section of Appendix 1 for a listing of these item groups.

(b) Psychological Therapy Services and Focussed Psychological Strategies (Allied Health) items were introduced on 1 November 2006 so data are not for a full year.

(c) Information for electroconvulsive therapy may include data for services provided by medical practitioners other than psychiatrists.

(d) Crude rate based on the preliminary Australian estimated resident population as at 31 December 2006.

(e) Covers psychologists, mental health nurses, occupational therapists, social workers and Aboriginal health workers.

n.p. not published.

.. Not applicable.

Source: Medicare Benefits Schedule data (Medicare Australia 2007b and DoHA)