

6 The patients

This chapter describes differences in patient characteristics and reasons for encounter across RRMA and ASGC Remoteness categories. For a summary of findings in each individual RRMA category or trends with ASGC Remoteness, please refer to Chapter 11 – Summary of results.

6.1 Patient characteristics

The characteristics of the patients at GP encounters in each RRMA category are described in Table 6.1(a) and in each ASGC category in Table 6.1(b). The results reported below are all statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) unless otherwise stated.

RRMA

Sex

- Nationally, a larger proportion of encounters were with female patients. This was consistent across all RRMA categories.
- The relative proportion of encounters with male patients was larger in Other Rural Areas and in Other Remote Areas, when compared with the national average.

Age

Compared with the national average:

- there was a larger proportion of infants (aged <1 year) in Large Rural Centres and Remote Centres
- there was a smaller proportion of children aged 1–4 years in Small Rural Centres and Other Rural Areas and a larger proportion in the remote zone
- there was a larger proportion of children aged 5–14 years in Other Rural Areas and the remote zone
- there was a smaller proportion of adolescent/young adult patients aged 15–24 years in Other Rural Areas
- there was a larger proportion of adults of aged 25–44 years in Capital Cities and the remote zone
- there was a smaller proportion of older patients of 65–74 years in Capital Cities
- there was a larger proportion of patients 65 years and older in Small Rural Centres and Other Rural Areas, and a smaller proportion in the remote zone.

New patient to the practice

- Compared with the national average new patients accounted for a larger proportion of encounters in Other Metropolitan Centres and Remote Centres, and a smaller proportion of encounters in Other Rural Areas.

Card holders

- The proportion of patients who held a Commonwealth concession card was higher in Other Metropolitan Centres and the rural zone but decreased markedly in the remote zone compared with the national average.
- The proportion of patients holding a Repatriation health card was greater than average in the rural zone and markedly lower in the remote zone.

Non-English-speaking background

Patients from a non-English-speaking background (NESB) were those who self-reported that the primary language spoken at home was not English. Compared with the national average:

- a larger proportion of encounters in Capital Cities, and a smaller proportions of encounters in Other Metropolitan Centres, the rural zone and Remote Centres were with NESB patients .

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

- There was a larger proportion of encounters with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients in the rural and remote zones compared with the national average. The proportion of encounters with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients in the remote zone was around 7 times that of the rural zone and 30 times that of the metropolitan zone.

ASGC Remoteness

Compared with the national average:

- In Inner Regional Australia there was a larger proportion of encounters with older patients (65 years and over)
- a smaller proportion of encounters in Inner Regional Australia and a larger proportion in Remote Australia were with new patients
- the proportion of encounters with patients from a non-English-speaking background was smaller in Inner Regional, Outer Regional and Remote Australia and although not statistically significant, Very Remote Australia had the highest proportion of encounters with patients from a non-English-speaking background
- the proportion of patients holding a Commonwealth concession card was larger in Inner and Outer Regional Australia.

Trends with increasing remoteness are described below.

- The proportion of encounters with male patients increased significantly with remoteness across Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote Australia.
- The age of patients decreased significantly with increasing remoteness across Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote Australia.
- Inner Regional Australia had the greatest proportion of encounters with patients who held a Repatriation health concession card, followed by a significant decreasing trend with increased remoteness across Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote Australia.
- The proportion of encounters with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander patients increased significantly with increasing remoteness.

Table 6.1(a): Characteristics of the patients at encounters by RRMA

| Patient characteristics | Per cent of encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Capital City (n=399,000) | Other Metropolitan (n=45,000) | Large Rural Centre (n=37,500) | Small Rural Centre (n=37,700) | Other Rural Area (n=72,400) | Remote Centre (n=3,900) | Other Remote Area (n=6,400) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| Sex (missing) | (4,182) | (524) | (433) | (440) | (896) | (44) | (84) | (6,603) |
| Males | 40.7 (40.3–41.1) | 40.2 (39.0–41.4) | 39.6 (38.3–41.0) | 40.0 (38.7–41.3) | 42.4 (41.6–43.3) | 42.3 (39.2–45.4) | 44.9 (42.2–47.6) | 40.8 (40.5–41.2) |
| Females | 59.3 (58.9–59.7) | 59.8 (58.6–61.0) | 60.4 (59.0–61.7) | 60.0 (58.7–61.3) | 57.6 (56.7–58.4) | 57.7 (54.6–60.8) | 55.1 (52.4–57.8) | 59.2 (58.8–59.5) |
| Age group (missing) | (3,098) | (372) | (402) | (408) | (876) | (43) | (78) | (5,277) |
| <1 year | 2.1 (2.0–2.1) | 2.1 (1.9–2.3) | 2.5 (2.3–2.7) | 1.9 (1.7–2.1) | 2.0 (1.8–2.1) | 3.1 (2.3–4.0) | 2.4 (1.8–3.0) | 2.1 (2.0–2.1) |
| 1–4 years | 5.0 (4.8–5.1) | 4.8 (4.5–5.1) | 4.7 (4.3–5.0) | 4.0 (3.7–4.3) | 4.1 (3.9–4.4) | 5.9 (4.7–7.0) | 5.8 (5.0–6.7) | 4.8 (4.7–4.9) |
| 5–14 years | 6.2 (6.1–6.4) | 6.0 (5.6–6.4) | 6.2 (5.7–6.6) | 6.3 (5.9–6.6) | 6.8 (6.5–7.1) | 7.4 (6.1–8.6) | 8.4 (7.2–9.5) | 6.3 (6.2–6.4) |
| 15–24 years | 10.1 (9.9–10.3) | 10.5 (9.8–11.2) | 9.5 (9.0–10.1) | 9.2 (8.6–9.9) | 8.3 (8.0–8.7) | 11.3 (9.7–12.8) | 9.2 (8.2–10.2) | 9.8 (9.7–10.0) |
| 25–44 years | 26.5 (26.1–26.9) | 24.0 (23.2–24.9) | 24.8 (23.8–25.7) | 23.5 (22.6–24.3) | 22.4 (21.8–23.0) | 33.9 (30.9–36.8) | 30.1 (27.6–32.6) | 25.6 (25.3–25.9) |
| 45–64 years | 25.6 (25.4–25.9) | 25.8 (25.1–26.5) | 26.0 (25.3–26.8) | 26.6 (25.8–27.3) | 27.0 (26.5–27.5) | 25.8 (23.2–28.4) | 26.5 (24.7–28.3) | 25.9 (25.7–26.1) |
| 65–74 years | 11.6 (11.3–11.8) | 12.9 (12.2–13.5) | 12.7 (12.0–13.4) | 13.9 (13.2–14.6) | 14.4 (13.9–14.9) | 6.5 (4.7–8.4) | 9.2 (7.6–10.7) | 12.2 (12.0–12.3) |
| 75+ years | 13.0 (12.6–13.4) | 14.0 (13.0–15.0) | 13.6 (12.6–14.6) | 14.6 (13.7–15.6) | 15.0 (14.4–15.7) | 6.3 (3.5–9.1) | 8.5 (6.5–10.5) | 13.4 (13.1–13.6) |

(continued)

Table 6.1(a) (continued): Characteristics of the patients at encounters by RRMA

| Patient characteristics | Per cent of encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | | | Australia (n=601,900) |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Capital City (n=399,000) | Other Metropolitan (n=45,000) | Large Rural Centre (n=37,500) | Small Rural Centre (n=37,700) | Other Rural Area (n=72,400) | Remote Centre (n=3,900) | Other Remote Area (n=6,400) | |
| Other characteristics | | | | | | | | |
| New patient to practice | 9.3 (9.0–9.7) | 11.8 (10.4–13.1) | 9.2 (8.2–10.3) | 8.4 (7.4–9.4) | 7.8 (7.2–8.4) | 17.4 (11.3–23.5) | 11.7 (8.2–15.3) | 9.4 (9.1–9.6) |
| Commonwealth concession card | 36.8 (36.1–37.4) | 43.6 (41.7–45.5) | 44.5 (42.7–46.4) | 47.4 (45.4–49.4) | 47.0 (45.6–48.3) | 29.3 (21.9–36.7) | 34.7 (28.4–40.9) | 39.6 (39.0–40.1) |
| Repatriation health card | 3.2 (3.1–3.3) | 3.8 (3.4–4.2) | 4.3 (4.0–4.7) | 4.6 (4.2–5.0) | 4.1 (3.8–4.3) | 2.4 (1.0–3.9) | 2.0 (1.4–2.5) | 3.5 (3.4–3.6) |
| Non-English-speaking background | 11.9 (11.2–12.5) | 4.1 (3.3–4.8) | 1.7 (1.1–2.4) | 1.4 (1.0–1.8) | 1.4 (1.1–1.7) | 3.5 (1.0–6.0) | 10.2 (4.0–16.4) | 8.7 (8.2–9.2) |
| Aboriginal person and/or Torres Strait Islander | 0.5 (0.5–0.6) | 0.7 (0.4–1.0) | 2.1 (1.2–2.9) | 2.8 (1.8–3.8) | 2.1 (1.5–2.7) | 15.2 (6.2–24.1) | 18.6 (11.4–25.9) | 1.3 (1.1–1.4) |

(a) Missing data removed.

Note: Shading indicates a significant difference between a RRMA and Australia (total sample). Darker shading indicates a higher than average result and lighter shading indicates a lower than average result.

Table 6.1(b): Characteristics of the patients at encounters by ASGC Remoteness

| Patient characteristics | Per cent of encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Major Cities (n=418,000) | Inner Regional Australia (n=115,700) | Outer Regional Australia (n=57,500) | Remote Australia (n=8,000) | Very Remote Australia (n=2,700) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| Sex (missing) | (4,389) | (1,353) | (720) | (102) | (39) | (6,603) |
| Males | 40.7 (40.3–41.1) | 40.3 (39.6–41.0) | 42.6 (41.6–43.6) | 43.7 (41.5–45.8) | 44.8 (40.2–49.5) | 40.8 (40.5–41.2) |
| Females | 59.3 (58.9–59.7) | 59.7 (59.0–60.4) | 57.4 (56.4–58.4) | 56.3 (54.2–58.5) | 55.2 (50.5–59.8) | 59.2 (58.8–59.5) |
| Age group (missing) | (3,262) | (1,267) | (604) | (107) | (37) | (5,277) |
| <1 year | 2.1 (2.0–2.1) | 2.1 (2.0–2.3) | 2.1 (1.9–2.3) | 2.3 (1.9–2.6) | 3.2 (2.0–4.4) | 2.1 (2.0–2.1) |
| 1–4 years | 5.0 (4.8–5.1) | 4.2 (4.0–4.4) | 4.7 (4.4–5.0) | 4.9 (4.2–5.6) | 6.8 (5.3–8.3) | 4.8 (4.7–4.9) |
| 5–14 years | 6.2 (6.0–6.3) | 6.4 (6.2–6.6) | 6.9 (6.5–7.2) | 7.6 (6.6–8.6) | 7.7 (5.7–9.7) | 6.3 (6.2–6.4) |
| 15–24 years | 10.2 (9.9–10.4) | 8.9 (8.6–9.3) | 9.2 (8.7–9.6) | 9.7 (8.8–10.7) | 10.1 (8.4–11.9) | 9.8 (9.7–10.0) |
| 25–44 years | 26.3 (25.9–26.6) | 23.0 (22.4–23.5) | 25.2 (24.5–25.9) | 29.4 (27.1–31.7) | 31.8 (27.4–36.2) | 25.6 (25.3–25.9) |
| 45–64 years | 25.6 (25.3–25.8) | 26.6 (26.1–27.0) | 26.9 (26.2–27.5) | 25.9 (24.4–27.4) | 26.8 (23.4–30.1) | 25.9 (25.7–26.1) |
| 65–74 years | 11.7 (11.5–11.9) | 13.9 (13.5–14.3) | 12.5 (12.0–13.0) | 10.6 (9.0–12.1) | 7.0 (4.5–9.4) | 12.2 (12.0–12.3) |
| 75+ years | 13.1 (12.8–13.5) | 14.9 (14.4–15.5) | 12.6 (11.9–13.3) | 9.7 (7.6–11.7) | 6.7 (3.1–10.3) | 13.4 (13.1–13.6) |

(continued)

Table 6.1(b) (continued): Characteristics of the patients at encounters by ASGC Remoteness

| Patient characteristics | Per cent of encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Major Cities (n=418,000) | Inner Regional Australia (n=115,700) | Outer Regional Australia (n=57,500) | Remote Australia (n=8,000) | Very Remote Australia (n=2,700) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| Other characteristics | | | | | | |
| New patient to practice | 9.6 (9.2–10.0) | 8.1 (7.6–8.6) | 9.3 (8.5–10.1) | 14.1 (10.3–17.9) | 12.2 (7.5–16.9) | 9.4 (9.1–9.6) |
| Commonwealth concession card | 37.2 (36.5–37.8) | 46.5 (45.4–47.6) | 43.7 (42.1–45.4) | 37.4 (32.3–42.6) | 33.6 (22.7–44.4) | 39.6 (39.0–40.1) |
| Repatriation health card | 3.2 (3.1–3.3) | 4.6 (4.3–4.8) | 3.6 (3.3–3.9) | 2.6 (1.9–3.2) | 1.3 (0.5–2.0) | 3.5 (3.4–3.6) |
| Non-English-speaking background | 11.6 (11.0–12.2) | 1.3 (1.1–1.5) | 2.8 (2.1–3.5) | 3.2 (1.1–5.4) | 18.2 (4.9–31.5) | 8.7 (8.2–9.2) |
| Aboriginal person and/or Torres Strait Islander | 0.5 (0.4–0.5) | 1.2 (0.9–1.5) | 4.2 (3.2–5.1) | 13.4 (8.1–18.6) | 27.4 (13.1–41.8) | 1.3 (1.1–1.4) |

(a) Missing data removed.

Note: Shading indicates a significant difference between an ASGC and Australia (total sample). Darker shading indicates a higher than average result and lighter shading indicates a lower than average result.

6.2 Patient reasons for encounter

International interest in reasons for encounter (RFEs) has been developing over the past three decades. They reflect the patient's demand for care and can provide an indication of service utilisation patterns, which may benefit from intervention on a population level.²²

RFEs are those concerns and expectations that patients bring to the GP. Participating GPs were asked to record at least one and up to three patient RFEs in words as close as possible to those used by the patient, before the diagnostic or management process had begun. These reflect the patient's view of their reasons for consulting the GP. RFEs can be expressed in terms of one or more symptoms (e.g. 'itchy eyes', 'chest pain'), in diagnostic terms (e.g. 'about my diabetes', 'for my hypertension'), a request for a service ('I need more scripts', 'I want a referral'), an expressed fear of disease, or a need for a check-up.

Patient RFEs have a many-to-many relationship to problems managed; that is, the patient may describe multiple symptoms that relate to a single problem managed at the encounter or may describe one RFE that relates to multiple problems.

Number of RFEs at encounter

The number of RFEs presented at encounters in each RRMA category are provided in Table 6.2(a) and for each ASGC Remoteness category in Table 6.2(b).

RRMA

- As earlier reported in Chapter 5 (The encounters), there were significantly fewer RFEs described by patients at encounters in Small Rural Centres, Other Rural Areas and Other Remote Areas compared with the national average.

ASGC Remoteness

- As earlier reported in Chapter 5 (The encounters), there were significantly fewer RFEs presented on average in Outer Regional Australia.
- The proportion of encounters having only one RFE increased with increasing remoteness.

Table 6.2(a): Number of reasons for encounter, by RRMA

| Number of RFEs at encounter | Per cent of encounters, 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | | | Australia (n=601,900) |
|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | Capital City (n=399,000) | Other Metropolitan (n=45,000) | Large Rural Centre (n=37,500) | Small Rural Centre (n=37,700) | Other Rural Area (n=72,400) | Remote Centre (n=3,900) | Other Remote Area (n=6,400) | |
| One RFE | 60.2 (59.7–60.7) | 61.6 (60.1–63.1) | 62.0 (60.4–63.5) | 63.5 (61.9–65.1) | 62.8 (61.7–63.9) | 64.8 (60.6–69.1) | 66.3 (62.7–69.9) | 61.0 (60.6–61.4) |
| Two RFEs | 28.2 (27.9–28.5) | 27.1 (26.3–28.0) | 27.0 (26.1–27.9) | 26.3 (25.3–27.3) | 26.6 (25.9–27.2) | 25.7 (22.7–28.6) | 24.6 (22.5–26.8) | 27.7 (27.4–27.9) |
| Three RFEs | 11.6 (11.4–11.9) | 11.3 (10.4–12.2) | 11.0 (10.1–11.9) | 10.2 (9.3–11.0) | 10.7 (10.0–11.3) | 9.5 (7.8–11.2) | 9.1 (7.2–10.9) | 11.3 (11.1–11.6) |
| Total RFEs | 151.5 (150.7–152.2) | 149.7 (147.4–152.0) | 149.0 (146.6–151.4) | 146.7 (144.3–149.0) | 147.9 (146.2–149.6) | 144.6 (138.6–150.6) | 142.8 (137.2–148.3) | 150.3 (149.7–150.9) |

Note: Shading indicates a significant difference between a RRMA and Australia (total sample). Darker shading indicates a higher than average result and lighter shading indicates a lower than average result.
RFE—reason for encounter.

Table 6.2(b): Number of reasons for encounter, by ASGC Remoteness

| Number of RFEs at encounter | Per cent of encounters, 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | Australia (n=601,900) |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | Major Cities (n=418,000) | Inner Regional Australia (n=115,700) | Outer Regional Australia (n=57,500) | Remote Australia (n=8,000) | Very Remote Australia (n=2,700) | |
| One RFE | 60.2 (59.7–60.7) | 62.4 (61.5–63.3) | 63.8 (62.6–65.0) | 63.1 (59.5–66.7) | 67.2 (61.2–73.2) | 61.0 (60.6–61.4) |
| Two RFEs | 28.2 (27.9–28.5) | 26.8 (26.3–27.3) | 26.2 (25.5–26.9) | 25.7 (23.7–27.6) | 23.7 (20.5–26.8) | 27.7 (27.4–27.9) |
| Three RFEs | 11.7 (11.4–12.0) | 10.8 (10.3–11.3) | 10.0 (9.3–10.6) | 11.2 (9.0–13.5) | 9.1 (5.8–12.4) | 11.3 (11.1–11.6) |
| Total RFEs | 151.5 (150.7–152.3) | 148.4 (147.0–149.8) | 146.2 (144.4–147.9) | 148.2 (142.4–153.9) | 141.9 (132.1–151.7) | 150.3 (149.7–150.9) |

Note: Shading indicates a significant difference between an ASGC and Australia (total sample). Darker shading indicates a higher than average result and lighter shading indicates a lower than average result.
RFE—reason for encounter.

Reasons for encounter by ICPC-2 component

For RFEs associated with each component of the ICPC, rates are reported in Table 6.3(a) for the RRMA categories and in Table 6.3(b) for the ASGC Remoteness categories. The results discussed below are compared with the national average and are all significant ($p < 0.05$) unless otherwise stated.

RRMA

- RFEs described in terms of symptoms and complaints were most frequent in Capital Cities and steadily decreased across the rural and remote zones.
- Visits to receive test results were most common in Capital Cities and steadily decreased across the rural and remote zones.
- For every ten encounters about three RFEs were described in diagnostic terms (e.g. 'about my diabetes') and there were no significant differences among the RRMA categories.
- Rates of request for medications, treatments and therapeutics (usually requests for repeat prescriptions) were most frequent in Other Rural Areas and least frequent in the remote zone.
- Requests for referrals were more common in Small Rural Centres and Other Rural Areas.
- Requests for results of tests and investigations were less common in Other Rural and Other Remote Areas.

ASGC Remoteness

- RFEs described in terms of symptoms and complaints were more frequent in Major Cities, and significantly less frequent in Outer Regional Australia.
- Rates of requests for medications, treatment and therapeutics, and requests for referrals were higher in Inner Regional Australia.
- The rate of requests for test results decreased significantly with increasing remoteness.

Table 6.3(a): Distribution of patient reasons for encounter across ICPC-2 components, by RRMA

| ICPC-2 component | Rate per 100 encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Capital City (n=399,000) | Other Metropolitan (n=45,000) | Large Rural Centre (n=37,500) | Small Rural Centre (n=37,700) | Other Rural Area (n=72,400) | Remote Centre (n=3,900) | Other Remote Area (n=6,400) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| Symptoms & complaints | 74.3 (73.5–75.1) | 71.8 (69.5–74.1) | 68.6 (66.4–70.8) | 65.2 (63.0–67.3) | 66.3 (64.8–67.9) | 69.5 (62.7–76.3) | 67.9 (62.7–73.2) | 72.1 (71.5–72.7) |
| Diagnoses, diseases | 27.7 (27.1–28.3) | 28.0 (26.2–29.9) | 28.3 (26.3–30.3) | 29.0 (27.1–30.9) | 28.6 (27.2–30.0) | 30.4 (23.2–37.7) | 29.6 (25.0–34.2) | 28.0 (27.5–28.5) |
| Diagnostic & preventive procedures | 24.1 (23.7–24.5) | 23.9 (22.6–25.2) | 25.0 (23.7–26.2) | 24.7 (23.3–26.0) | 25.3 (24.3–26.3) | 20.9 (17.4–24.4) | 21.7 (19.1–24.3) | 24.3 (23.9–24.6) |
| Medications, treatments & therapeutics | 12.2 (11.9–12.5) | 13.1 (12.3–13.9) | 13.0 (12.2–13.8) | 13.5 (12.7–14.4) | 14.0 (13.3–14.7) | 10.9 (8.4–13.5) | 11.2 (8.8–13.6) | 12.6 (12.4–12.8) |
| Referral & other RFE | 6.7 (6.5–6.9) | 6.8 (6.1–7.5) | 7.8 (7.1–8.5) | 8.2 (7.4–8.9) | 8.0 (7.5–8.5) | 7.3 (5.1–9.4) | 7.9 (5.8–10.0) | 7.1 (6.9–7.2) |
| Results | 5.0 (4.9–5.2) | 4.7 (4.3–5.1) | 4.6 (4.2–5.1) | 4.4 (4.0–4.8) | 4.2 (3.9–4.5) | 3.9 (2.7–5.0) | 3.3 (2.4–4.3) | 4.8 (4.7–4.9) |
| Administrative | 1.4 (1.4–1.5) | 1.4 (1.2–1.6) | 1.7 (1.5–1.9) | 1.7 (1.5–2.0) | 1.5 (1.4–1.6) | 1.8 (1.2–2.4) | 1.1 (0.7–1.5) | 1.5 (1.4–1.5) |
| Total RFEs | 151.5 (150.7–152.2) | 149.7 (147.4–152.0) | 149.0 (146.6–151.4) | 146.7 (144.3–149.0) | 147.9 (146.2–149.6) | 144.6 (138.6–150.6) | 142.8 (137.2–148.3) | 150.3 (149.7–150.9) |

(a) Figures do not total 100 as more than one RFE can be recorded at each encounter.

Note: Shading indicates a significant difference between a RRMA and Australia (total sample). Darker shading indicates a higher than average result and lighter shading indicates a lower than average result.
RFE—reason for encounter.

Table 6.3(b): Distribution of patient reasons for encounter across ICPC-2 components, by ASGC Remoteness

| ICPC-2 component | Rate per 100 encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Major Cities (n=418,000) | Inner Regional Australia (n=115,700) | Outer Regional Australia (n=57,500) | Remote Australia (n=8,000) | Very Remote Australia (n=2,700) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| Symptoms & complaints | 74.3 (73.6–75.1) | 66.4 (65.2–76.6) | 68.3 (66.5–70.1) | 67.3 (62.4–72.3) | 68.2 (58.3–78.0) | 72.1 (71.5–72.7) |
| Diagnoses, diseases | 27.9 (27.3–28.5) | 28.1 (27.0–29.2) | 27.8 (26.2–29.4) | 32.9 (27.5–38.3) | 31.2 (23.1–39.2) | 28.0 (27.5–28.5) |
| Diagnostic & preventive procedures | 24.1 (23.6–24.5) | 25.4 (24.7–26.2) | 23.8 (22.8–24.9) | 24.2 (21.3–27.0) | 19.7 (15.3–24.1) | 24.3 (23.9–24.6) |
| Medications, treatments & therapeutics | 12.2 (11.9–12.4) | 13.9 (13.4–14.4) | 13.2 (12.4–13.9) | 12.1 (10.1–14.1) | 9.5 (5.6–13.3) | 12.6 (12.4–12.8) |
| Referral & other RFE | 6.7 (6.5–6.9) | 8.2 (7.8–8.6) | 7.6 (7.1–8.2) | 6.8 (5.4–8.2) | 8.8 (4.3–13.3) | 7.1 (6.9–7.2) |
| Results | 5.0 (4.9–5.2) | 4.6 (4.4–4.9) | 4.0 (3.6–4.3) | 3.5 (2.7–4.3) | 3.1 (1.6–4.7) | 4.8 (4.7–4.9) |
| Administrative | 1.4 (1.3–1.4) | 1.7 (1.6–1.8) | 1.5 (1.3–1.6) | 1.3 (1.0–1.7) | 1.5 (0.7–2.2) | 1.5 (1.4–1.5) |
| Total RFEs | 151.5 (150.7–152.3) | 148.4 (147.0–149.8) | 146.2 (144.4–147.9) | 148.2 (142.4–153.9) | 141.9 (132.1–151.7) | 150.3 (149.7–150.9) |

(a) Figures do not total 100 as more than one RFE can be recorded at each encounter.

Note: Shading indicates a significant difference between an ASGC and Australia (total sample). Darker shading indicates a higher than average result and lighter shading indicates a lower than average result. RFE—reason for encounter.

Reasons for encounter by ICPC-2 chapter and common individual RFEs

RRMA

Presentation rates for RFEs classified in each ICPC-2 chapter, and for those individual RFEs that are significantly different from the national average, are presented for RRMA in Table 6.4(a). The results reported below are compared with the national average and are all statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) unless otherwise stated.

- RFEs related to the respiratory system were more common in Capital Cities and decreased across the rural and remote zones.
 - Presentations of cough and throat complaints were more frequent in Capital Cities, but less frequent in the rural zone (Large Rural Centres, Small Rural Centres and Other Rural Areas).
 - Presentations of upper respiratory tract infections (usually described as 'a cold') were more common in Capital Cities, and less common in Small Rural Centres, Other Rural Areas and Other Remote Areas.
 - Sneeze/nasal congestion presented less frequently in the rural zone and Other Remote Areas.
- RFEs related to the skin presented at a higher rate in Large Rural Centres and Other Rural Areas. An observed higher rate in Other Remote Areas was not statistically significant, possibly due to the smaller sample size.
 - Rash, the most common individual skin-related RFE, presented less frequently in Small Rural Centres and Other Rural Areas. Unspecified skin complaints presented at higher rates in the rural zone.
- In Remote Centres, RFEs related to the circulatory system presented at lower rates and RFEs associated with the ear arose at a higher rate.
- Neurological issues presented at lower rates in Small Rural Centres and Other Rural Areas.
- RFEs related to pregnancy/family planning were given at a lower rate in Capital Cities and at a higher rate in Small Rural Centres, Other Rural Areas and the remote zone. In Remote Centres patients described pregnancy and family planning issues at double the average rate.
 - RFEs related to contraception (other than oral) arose at a higher rate (double the average rate) in Very Remote Areas.
- RFEs of a psychological nature and those associated with the female genital system were less frequent in Other Rural Areas and in Other Remote Areas.
 - Depression was less commonly reported as a RFE in Other Remote Areas but more common in Large Rural Centres.
 - Sleep disturbance was less often given as a RFE in Large Rural Centres and Other Rural Areas.
 - Anxiety was given as a RFE less often in Other Rural Areas.
- RFEs related to the digestive system, particularly diarrhoea and vomiting, were significantly less common in both Small Rural Centres and Other Rural Areas.
- RFEs related to the female genital system were significantly less common in Other Rural and Other Remote Areas.

- Diabetes as an RFE presented significantly more often in Other Rural Areas and the rate remained high in Remote Centres and Other Remote Areas.
- RFEs related to the eye and to the blood/blood-forming organs were significantly less common in Small Rural Centres.
- Presentations of fever were significantly more common in Capital Cities, and significantly less common in the rural zone.
- Weakness/tiredness was a less common RFE in Other Rural Areas.
- Undifferentiated chest pain was significantly more common as a RFE in Other Remote Areas.
- Request for a check-up (either of a specific body system or a general check) was the most common RFE in all categories, but arose significantly more often in the rural zone.
- Presentations for receipt of test results were less common in Other Rural and Other Remote Areas.
- RFEs related to immunisation and vaccination were significantly less common in both Remote Centres and Other Remote Areas.
- There were no significant differences across RRMA categories in the rate of presentation of issues related to the musculoskeletal, urological and male genital systems or of a social nature.

ASGC Remoteness

Presentation rates for RFEs classified in each ICPC-2 chapter, and for those individual RFEs that were significantly different from the national average, are presented for ASGC in Table 6.4(b). The results reported below are all statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) unless otherwise stated. Compared with the national average:

- RFEs classified in the ICPC-2 General and Unspecific chapter arose at a higher rate in Inner Regional Australia
- the rates of RFEs related to all types of check-up and for prescriptions were higher in Inner Regional Australia
- fever was reported at a lower rate in Inner Regional Australia
- there was a significantly higher rate of RFEs related to the respiratory system in Major Cities, particularly, cough, throat complaint and URTI
- RFEs related to the skin were reported at higher rates in Inner and Outer Regional Australia and Remote Australia
- there were higher rates of RFEs related to 'other contraception' in Very Remote Australia, three times the national average
- there was a lower rate of RFEs for depression in Very Remote Australia
- the rate of RFEs related to the female genital system was lower in Very Remote Australia.

Trends with increasing remoteness are listed below.

- The rate of RFEs related to the circulatory system, neurological system and female genital system, along with the rate of RFEs for immunisations and test results, all decreased with increasing remoteness.
- The rate of RFEs for diabetes increased with increasing remoteness.

Table 6.4(a): Rates of patient reasons for encounter across ICPC-2 chapters and selected individual RFEs, by RRMA

| ICPC-2 chapter and concept | Rate per 100 encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Capital City (n=399,000) | Other Metropolitan (n=45,000) | Large Rural Centre (n=37,500) | Small Rural Centre (n=37,700) | Other Rural Area (n=72,400) | Remote Centre (n=3,900) | Other Remote Area (n=6,400) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| General & unspecified | 31.8 (31.4–32.3) | 32.2 (30.8–33.5) | 33.1 (31.7–34.4) | 32.6 (31.2–34.0) | 33.3 (32.3–34.4) | 27.8 (23.6–32.0) | 30.2 (27.2–33.1) | 32.1 (31.8–32.5) |
| Fever | 2.1 (2.0–2.2) | 1.8 (1.5–2.0) | 1.5 (1.2–1.7) | 1.2 (1.1–1.4) | 1.4 (1.2–1.5) | 2.4 (1.4–3.3) | 1.5 (1.1–2.0) | 1.9 (1.8–1.9) |
| Weakness/tiredness | 1.7 (1.6–1.7) | 1.6 (1.3–1.8) | 1.5 (1.3–1.7) | 1.4 (1.2–1.6) | 1.3 (1.2–1.4) | 1.5 (1.0–2.0) | 1.2 (0.8–1.5) | 1.6 (1.5–1.6) |
| Chest pain NOS | 1.2 (1.1–1.2) | 1.3 (1.1–1.4) | 1.2 (1.1–1.4) | 1.3 (1.2–1.5) | 1.4 (1.3–1.5) | 1.0 (0.5–1.4) | 1.9 (1.5–2.3) | 1.2 (1.2–1.3) |
| Respiratory | 23.7 (23.3–24.0) | 21.5 (20.4–22.5) | 19.7 (18.7–20.7) | 19.1 (18.1–20.1) | 19.1 (18.4–19.8) | 19.3 (16.5–22.0) | 18.4 (16.2–20.7) | 22.3 (22.1–22.6) |
| Cough | 6.5 (6.3–6.6) | 6.0 (5.5–6.4) | 5.4 (4.9–5.8) | 4.8 (4.3–5.2) | 5.0 (4.7–5.3) | 6.0 (4.5–7.5) | 4.9 (3.9–5.9) | 6.1 (5.9–6.2) |
| Throat complaint | 3.9 (3.7–4.0) | 3.0 (2.7–3.3) | 2.6 (2.3–2.8) | 2.5 (2.2–2.8) | 2.6 (2.4–2.8) | 2.7 (1.8–3.6) | 2.5 (1.9–3.0) | 3.5 (3.4–3.5) |
| Upper respiratory tract infection | 2.5 (2.4–2.6) | 2.0 (1.7–2.3) | 2.0 (1.7–2.3) | 1.7 (1.5–1.9) | 1.4 (1.3–1.6) | 2.2 (1.3–3.0) | 1.4 (0.8–1.9) | 2.3 (2.2–2.3) |
| Sneeze/nasal congestion | 1.5 (1.4–1.6) | 1.2 (1.0–1.4) | 0.8 (0.7–1.0) | 0.8 (0.6–0.9) | 0.9 (0.7–1.0) | 0.9 (0.4–1.3) | 0.7 (0.4–1.1) | 1.3 (1.3–1.4) |
| Musculoskeletal | 16.8 (16.5–17.1) | 16.5 (15.8–17.2) | 16.5 (15.7–17.2) | 16.5 (15.8–17.1) | 17.3 (16.7–17.8) | 15.3 (13.3–17.2) | 17.5 (15.8–19.2) | 16.8 (16.5–17.0) |
| Skin | 14.6 (14.3–14.8) | 15.6 (14.7–16.5) | 17.1 (15.9–18.2) | 15.1 (14.5–15.8) | 15.8 (15.3–16.2) | 15.1 (13.6–16.5) | 16.6 (15.1–18.0) | 15.0 (14.8–15.2) |
| Rash* | 2.8 (2.7–2.9) | 2.9 (2.7–3.1) | 2.8 (2.6–3.1) | 2.4 (2.2–2.6) | 2.4 (2.2–2.5) | 2.4 (1.8–2.9) | 2.4 (1.9–2.9) | 2.7 (2.7–2.8) |
| Skin complaint | 1.3 (1.2–1.3) | 1.4 (1.2–1.5) | 1.7 (1.5–2.0) | 1.7 (1.5–1.8) | 1.7 (1.6–1.8) | 1.5 (0.9–2.1) | 1.8 (1.3–2.2) | 1.4 (1.3–1.4) |
| Circulatory | 11.3 (11.1–11.6) | 11.3 (10.5–12.0) | 10.6 (9.8–11.4) | 11.2 (10.5–12.0) | 11.6 (11.1–12.2) | 7.3 (5.4–9.2) | 10.4 (8.6–12.2) | 11.3 (11.1–11.5) |

(continued)

Table 6.4(a) (continued): Rates of patient reasons for encounter across ICPC-2 chapters and selected individual RFEs, by RRMA

| ICPC-2 chapter and concept | Rate per 100 encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Capital City (n=399,000) | Other Metropolitan (n=45,000) | Large Rural Centre (n=37,500) | Small Rural Centre (n=37,700) | Other Rural Area (n=72,400) | Remote Centre (n=3,900) | Other Remote Area (n=6,400) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| Digestive | 10.6 (10.5–10.8) | 10.0 (9.5–10.5) | 9.9 (9.4–10.4) | 9.5 (9.0–9.9) | 9.7 (9.4–10.1) | 10.4 (8.9–11.9) | 10.4 (9.2–11.5) | 10.4 (10.2–10.5) |
| Diarrhoea | 1.4 (1.4–1.5) | 1.2 (1.1–1.4) | 1.2 (1.1–1.4) | 0.9 (0.8–1.0) | 1.1 (1.0–1.1) | 1.8 (1.2–2.4) | 1.5 (1.0–1.9) | 1.3 (1.3–1.4) |
| Vomiting | 1.1 (1.1–1.2) | 1.1 (1.0–1.3) | 1.1 (1.0–1.2) | 0.9 (0.7–1.0) | 0.8 (0.8–0.9) | 1.3 (0.9–1.8) | 1.1 (0.7–1.5) | 1.1 (1.0–1.1) |
| Psychological | 8.2 (7.9–8.4) | 8.2 (7.2–9.1) | 7.9 (7.3–8.5) | 8.2 (7.5–9.0) | 7.0 (6.7–7.3) | 9.2 (7.0–11.3) | 5.4 (4.2–6.6) | 8.0 (7.8–8.2) |
| Depression* | 2.0 (1.9–2.1) | 2.1 (1.8–2.3) | 2.4 (2.2–2.6) | 2.3 (2.0–2.7) | 1.9 (1.8–2.0) | 2.3 (1.5–3.1) | 1.5 (1.1–1.9) | 2.1 (2.0–2.1) |
| Sleep disturbance | 1.3 (1.2–1.3) | 1.1 (0.9–1.2) | 0.9 (0.8–1.0) | 1.2 (1.0–1.3) | 1.0 (0.9–1.1) | 1.3 (0.9–1.7) | 0.7 (0.4–1.0) | 1.2 (1.2–1.2) |
| Anxiety* | 1.1 (1.1–1.2) | 1.2 (1.0–1.5) | 1.0 (0.8–1.1) | 1.1 (0.9–1.3) | 0.8 (0.8–0.9) | 0.7 (0.3–1.2) | 0.6 (0.2–1.0) | 1.1 (1.0–1.1) |
| Female genital system | 6.4 (6.2–6.6) | 6.8 (5.9–7.7) | 6.4 (5.7–7.1) | 6.2 (5.6–6.9) | 5.5 (5.0–5.9) | 6.0 (4.7–7.3) | 4.3 (3.5–5.2) | 6.3 (6.1–6.5) |
| Endocrine & metabolic | 6.0 (5.9–6.2) | 5.5 (5.1–6.0) | 5.9 (5.2–6.6) | 5.8 (5.4–6.3) | 6.0 (5.7–6.3) | 6.7 (5.1–8.4) | 6.0 (5.0–7.1) | 6.0 (5.8–6.1) |
| Diabetes* | 0.9 (0.8–0.9) | 0.9 (0.8–1.1) | 1.0 (0.8–1.2) | 1.0 (0.8–1.2) | 1.1 (1.0–1.2) | 1.2 (0.6–1.7) | 1.2 (0.7–1.7) | 0.9 (0.9–0.9) |
| Neurological | 5.6 (5.5–5.7) | 5.3 (5.0–5.6) | 5.1 (4.8–5.3) | 5.0 (4.7–5.3) | 5.1 (4.9–5.4) | 5.3 (4.3–6.2) | 4.9 (4.1–5.7) | 5.4 (5.4–5.5) |
| Headache | 2.1 (2.0–2.1) | 1.9 (1.7–2.0) | 1.8 (1.6–1.9) | 1.5 (1.3–1.6) | 1.6 (1.4–1.7) | 1.6 (1.1–2.1) | 1.7 (1.3–2.1) | 1.9 (1.9–2.0) |
| Ear | 4.0 (3.9–4.1) | 4.0 (3.8–4.3) | 4.3 (4.0–4.6) | 4.2 (3.9–4.5) | 4.0 (3.8–4.2) | 5.1 (4.2–5.9) | 4.2 (3.5–4.8) | 4.0 (4.0–4.1) |

(continued)

Table 6.4(a) (continued): Rates of patient reasons for encounter across ICPC-2 chapters and selected individual RFEs, by RRMA

| ICPC-2 chapter and concept | Rate per 100 encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Capital City (n=399,000) | Other Metropolitan (n=45,000) | Large Rural Centre (n=37,500) | Small Rural Centre (n=37,700) | Other Rural Area (n=72,400) | Remote Centre (n=3,900) | Other Remote Area (n=6,400) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| Pregnancy & family planning | 3.5 (3.3–3.6) | 4.3 (3.8–4.7) | 4.2 (3.7–4.6) | 5.1 (4.4–5.8) | 4.7 (4.3–5.1) | 7.7 (6.3–9.2) | 5.4 (4.3–6.5) | 3.9 (3.8–4.0) |
| Oral contraception* | 1.0 (1.0–1.1) | 1.1 (0.9–1.2) | 0.9 (0.8–1.1) | 0.8 (0.6–0.9) | 0.8 (0.6–0.8) | 1.0 (0.6–1.4) | 0.8 (0.6–1.0) | 1.0 (0.9–1.0) |
| Other contraception | 0.4 (0.4–0.5) | 0.6 (0.5–0.7) | 0.6 (0.5–0.7) | 0.5 (0.4–0.6) | 0.5 (0.5–0.6) | 0.6 (0.3–0.9) | 1.0 (0.6–1.4) | 0.5 (0.5–0.5) |
| Pregnancy* | 0.5 (0.5–0.5) | 0.5 (0.4–0.6) | 0.6 (0.5–0.7) | 0.6 (0.5–0.8) | 0.5 (0.4–0.6) | 1.0 (0.5–1.4) | 0.6 (0.3–0.9) | 0.5 (0.5–0.5) |
| Eye | 2.8 (2.7–2.8) | 2.5 (2.3–2.7) | 2.5 (2.3–2.7) | 2.3 (2.1–2.5) | 2.5 (2.4–2.6) | 2.9 (2.2–3.5) | 3.3 (2.7–3.8) | 2.7 (2.6–2.7) |
| Urology | 2.5 (2.5–2.6) | 2.7 (2.5–2.9) | 2.5 (2.3–2.7) | 2.3 (2.1–2.5) | 2.6 (2.4–2.7) | 2.8 (1.8–3.8) | 2.3 (1.9–2.8) | 2.5 (2.5–2.6) |
| Blood | 1.6 (1.5–1.7) | 1.3 (1.2–1.5) | 1.3 (1.2–1.5) | 1.2 (1.1–1.4) | 1.6 (1.4–1.7) | 1.4 (0.9–1.9) | 1.4 (1.0–1.8) | 1.5 (1.5–1.6) |
| Social | 1.1 (1.0–1.2) | 1.0 (0.8–1.1) | 1.1 (1.0–1.3) | 1.1 (0.9–1.3) | 1.0 (0.9–1.1) | 1.4 (0.9–1.9) | 1.1 (0.6–1.5) | 1.1 (1.0–1.1) |
| Male genital system | 1.0 (0.9–1.0) | 1.0 (0.9–1.2) | 1.0 (0.9–1.2) | 1.1 (1.0–1.3) | 1.2 (1.1–1.3) | 1.2 (0.8–1.6) | 1.1 (0.8–1.3) | 1.0 (1.0–1.1) |
| Cross-chapter concepts | | | | | | | | |
| Check-up—all* | 14.1 (13.8–14.4) | 14.8 (13.9–15.8) | 16.0 (15.0–17.1) | 16.3 (15.3–17.3) | 15.9 (15.2–16.7) | 15.5 (12.4–18.5) | 14.1 (12.2–15.9) | 14.7 (14.4–14.9) |
| Test results* | 5.0 (4.9–5.2) | 4.7 (4.3–5.1) | 4.6 (4.2–5.1) | 4.4 (4.0–4.8) | 4.2 (3.9–4.5) | 3.9 (2.7–5.0) | 3.3 (2.4–4.3) | 4.8 (4.7–4.9) |
| Immunisation/vaccination—all* | 4.8 (4.6–5.0) | 4.5 (4.0–5.1) | 4.6 (4.1–5.2) | 4.1 (3.5–4.7) | 4.1 (3.6–4.5) | 1.6 (0.8–2.4) | 2.6 (1.3–3.9) | 4.6 (4.4–4.8) |
| Total RFEs | 151.5 (150.7–152.2) | 149.7 (147.4–152.0) | 149.0 (146.6–151.4) | 146.7 (144.3–149.0) | 147.9 (146.2–149.6) | 144.6 (138.6–150.6) | 142.8 (137.2–148.3) | 150.3 (149.7–150.9) |

(a) Figures do not total 100 as more than one RFE can be recorded at each encounter.

* Includes multiple ICPC-2 or ICPC-2 PLUS codes (see Appendix 3, <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10171>>).

Note: Shading indicates a significant difference between a RRMA and Australia (total sample). Darker shading indicates a higher than average result and lighter shading indicates a lower than average result.

Table 6.4(b): Rates of patient reasons for encounter across ICPC-2 chapters and selected individual RFEs, by ASGC Remoteness

| ICPC-2 chapter and concept | Rate per 100 encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Major Cities (n=418,000) | Inner Regional Australia (n=115,700) | Outer Regional Australia (n=57,500) | Remote Australia (n=8,000) | Very Remote Australia (n=2,700) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| General & unspecified | 31.7 (31.3–32.1) | 33.6 (32.8–34.5) | 32.7 (31.5–33.8) | 30.5 (28.0–33.1) | 28.4 (23.6–33.2) | 32.1 (31.8–32.5) |
| Fever | 2.1 (2.0–2.1) | 1.3 (1.2–1.4) | 1.6 (1.4–1.8) | 1.8 (1.2–2.4) | 1.3 (0.6–2.1) | 1.9 (1.8–1.9) |
| Weakness/tiredness | 1.7 (1.6–1.7) | 1.4 (1.3–1.5) | 1.4 (1.3–1.6) | 1.2 (0.9–1.4) | 1.4 (0.8–2.0) | 1.6 (1.5–1.6) |
| Pain, chest NOS | 1.2 (1.1–1.2) | 1.4 (1.3–1.4) | 1.3 (1.2–1.4) | 1.5 (1.2–1.8) | 1.4 (0.7–2.1) | 1.2 (1.2–1.3) |
| Respiratory | 23.7 (23.4–24.1) | 19.2 (18.6–19.7) | 19.5 (18.7–20.3) | 18.1 (16.0–20.2) | 19.3 (15.4–23.3) | 22.3 (22.1–22.6) |
| Cough | 6.5 (6.3–6.6) | 5.0 (4.7–5.2) | 5.4 (5.0–5.8) | 4.5 (3.6–5.4) | 4.9 (3.2–6.7) | 6.1 (5.9–6.2) |
| Throat complaint | 3.8 (3.7–3.9) | 2.5 (2.4–2.7) | 2.8 (2.6–3.0) | 2.6 (2.1–3.2) | 2.2 (1.4–3.0) | 3.5 (3.4–3.5) |
| Upper respiratory tract infection | 2.5 (2.4–2.6) | 1.7 (1.6–1.9) | 1.6 (1.4–1.8) | 1.4 (1.0–1.8) | 1.7 (0.7–2.7) | 2.3 (2.2–2.3) |
| Sneeze/nasal congestion | 1.5 (1.4–1.6) | 0.8 (0.7–0.9) | 1.0 (0.8–1.1) | 0.8 (0.5–1.1) | 0.8 (0.3–1.4) | 1.3 (1.3–1.4) |
| Musculoskeletal | 16.8 (16.5–17.1) | 16.8 (16.4–17.3) | 16.7 (16.1–17.3) | 17.5 (16.0–19.0) | 16.2 (13.2–19.1) | 16.8 (16.5–17.0) |
| Skin | 14.6 (14.4–14.9) | 15.8 (15.3–16.3) | 16.0 (15.5–16.5) | 16.6 (15.4–17.8) | 15.6 (13.1–18.0) | 15.0 (14.8–15.2) |
| Rash* | 2.8 (2.8–2.9) | 2.5 (2.4–2.6) | 2.6 (2.4–2.8) | 2.3 (1.9–2.7) | 2.4 (1.6–3.2) | 2.7 (2.7–2.8) |
| Skin complaint NOS | 1.3 (1.2–1.3) | 1.7 (1.6–1.8) | 1.7 (1.5–1.8) | 1.8 (1.3–2.2) | 1.9 (1.2–2.7) | 1.4 (1.3–1.4) |
| Circulatory | 11.4 (11.1–11.6) | 11.4 (11.0–11.8) | 10.5 (9.9–11.0) | 10.3 (8.5–12.1) | 10.0 (6.2–13.7) | 11.3 (11.1–11.5) |

(continued)

Table 6.4(b) (continued): Rates of patient reasons for encounter across ICPC-2 chapters and selected individual RFEs, by ASGC Remoteness

| ICPC-2 chapter and concept | Rate per 100 encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Major Cities (n=418,000) | Inner Regional Australia (n=115,700) | Outer Regional Australia (n=57,500) | Remote Australia (n=8,000) | Very Remote Australia (n=2,700) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| Digestive | 10.6 (10.5–10.8) | 9.7 (9.4–10.0) | 9.7 (9.3–10.0) | 10.3 (9.1–11.4) | 11.2 (9.2–13.2) | 10.4 (10.2–10.5) |
| Diarrhoea | 1.4 (1.4–1.5) | 1.1 (1.0–1.1) | 1.1 (1.0–1.2) | 1.5 (1.1–1.9) | 2.0 (1.2–2.8) | 1.3 (1.3–1.4) |
| Psychological | 8.2 (7.9–8.4) | 7.9 (7.5–8.3) | 6.9 (6.5–7.3) | 7.4 (6.0–8.7) | 6.0 (3.6–8.4) | 8.0 (7.8–8.2) |
| Depression* | 2.0 (1.9–2.1) | 2.2 (2.1–2.4) | 1.8 (1.7–2.0) | 2.4 (1.9–3.0) | 1.2 (0.5–1.8) | 2.1 (2.0–2.1) |
| Sleep disturbance | 1.3 (1.2–1.3) | 1.0 (0.9–1.1) | 1.0 (0.9–1.1) | 1.0 (0.8–1.3) | 0.7 (0.4–1.1) | 1.2 (1.2–1.2) |
| Anxiety* | 1.2 (1.1–1.2) | 1.0 (0.9–1.1) | 0.9 (0.8–1.0) | 0.7 (0.4–0.9) | 0.7 (0.0–1.5) | 1.1 (1.0–1.1) |
| Female genital system | 6.5 (6.2–6.7) | 6.1 (5.7–6.5) | 5.7 (5.2–6.1) | 5.6 (4.5–6.6) | 4.4 (2.8–6.0) | 6.3 (6.1–6.5) |
| Endocrine & metabolic | 6.0 (5.9–6.2) | 5.9 (5.6–6.2) | 5.6 (5.3–5.9) | 6.8 (5.6–7.9) | 6.8 (4.8–8.8) | 6.0 (5.8–6.1) |
| Diabetes* | 0.9 (0.8–0.9) | 1.0 (0.9–1.0) | 1.0 (0.9–1.2) | 1.3 (0.7–1.8) | 1.7 (0.7–2.7) | 0.9 (0.9–0.9) |
| Neurological | 5.6 (5.5–5.7) | 5.1 (4.9–5.3) | 5.1 (4.8–5.3) | 4.9 (4.2–5.6) | 4.7 (3.4–6.0) | 5.4 (5.4–5.5) |
| Headache | 2.1 (2.0–2.1) | 1.6 (1.5–1.7) | 1.7 (1.5–1.8) | 1.5 (1.2–1.8) | 1.9 (1.1–2.6) | 1.9 (1.9–2.0) |
| Ear | 4.0 (3.9–4.1) | 4.1 (3.9–4.2) | 4.4 (4.1–4.6) | 4.6 (3.9–5.3) | 4.0 (3.1–4.9) | 4.0 (4.0–4.1) |
| Ear pain | 1.6 (1.6–1.7) | 1.7 (1.6–1.8) | 1.9 (1.8–2.1) | 2.0 (1.6–2.5) | 1.9 (1.2–2.7) | 1.7 (1.6–1.7) |
| Pregnancy & family planning | 3.5 (3.4–3.7) | 4.4 (4.1–4.7) | 4.9 (4.5–5.3) | 6.1 (5.1–7.2) | 5.1 (3.7–6.5) | 3.9 (3.8–4.0) |

(continued)

Table 6.4(b) (continued): Rates of patient reasons for encounter across ICPC-2 chapters and selected individual RFEs, by ASGC Remoteness

| ICPC-2 chapter and concept | Rate per 100 encounters, ^(a) 95% confidence interval, column specific | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | Major Cities (n=418,000) | Inner Regional Australia (n=115,700) | Outer Regional Australia (n=57,500) | Remote Australia (n=8,000) | Very Remote Australia (n=2,700) | Australia (n=601,900) |
| Oral contraception* | 1.0 (1.0–1.1) | 0.8 (0.7–0.9) | 0.9 (0.8–1.0) | 0.8 (0.6–1.1) | 0.9 (0.4–1.4) | 1.0 (0.9–1.0) |
| Other contraception | 0.5 (0.4–0.5) | 0.5 (0.5–0.6) | 0.6 (0.5–0.7) | 0.6 (0.4–0.9) | 1.4 (0.7–2.2) | 0.5 (0.5–0.5) |
| Pregnancy* | 0.5 (0.5–0.6) | 0.5 (0.5–0.6) | 0.6 (0.5–0.7) | 1.1 (0.6–1.5) | 0.3 (0.1–0.4) | 0.5 (0.5–0.5) |
| Eye | 2.8 (2.7–2.8) | 2.4 (2.3–2.5) | 2.6 (2.4–2.8) | 3.0 (2.6–3.5) | 3.7 (2.7–4.7) | 2.7 (2.6–2.7) |
| Urology | 2.6 (2.5–2.6) | 2.4 (2.3–2.5) | 2.5 (2.3–2.6) | 2.9 (2.3–3.6) | 2.6 (1.9–3.3) | 2.5 (2.5–2.6) |
| Blood | 1.6 (1.5–1.7) | 1.4 (1.3–1.5) | 1.4 (1.3–1.6) | 1.7 (1.3–2.1) | 1.3 (0.8–1.8) | 1.5 (1.5–1.6) |
| Social | 1.1 (1.0–1.1) | 1.2 (1.0–1.2) | 1.0 (0.9–1.1) | 0.9 (0.6–1.2) | 1.5 (0.6–2.4) | 1.1 (1.0–1.1) |
| Male genital system | 1.0 (0.9–1.0) | 1.1 (1.0–1.2) | 1.2 (1.1–1.3) | 0.9 (0.7–1.2) | 1.1 (0.7–1.6) | 1.0 (1.0–1.1) |
| Cross-chapter concepts | | | | | | |
| Check-up—all* | 14.1 (13.8–14.4) | 16.1 (15.5–16.6) | 15.4 (14.6–16.2) | 16.1 (13.8–18.3) | 12.4 (9.8–15.1) | 14.7 (14.4–14.9) |
| Prescription—all* | 10.1 (9.9–10.4) | 11.1 (10.6–11.5) | 10.4 (9.7–11.1) | 9.2 (7.5–10.9) | 7.2 (3.8–10.5) | 10.3 (10.1–10.5) |
| Test results* | 5.0 (4.9–5.2) | 4.6 (4.4–4.9) | 4.0 (3.6–4.3) | 3.5 (2.7–4.3) | 3.1 (1.6–4.7) | 4.8 (4.7–4.9) |
| Immunisation/vaccination—all* | 4.8 (4.6–5.0) | 4.6 (4.2–4.9) | 3.5 (3.1–3.9) | 3.0 (1.8–4.2) | 3.0 (0.3–5.6) | 4.6 (4.4–4.8) |
| Total RFEs | 151.5 (150.7–152.3) | 148.4 (147.0–149.8) | 146.2 (144.4–147.9) | 148.2 (142.4–153.9) | 141.9 (132.1–151.7) | 150.3 (149.7–150.9) |

(a) Figures do not total 100 as more than one RFE can be recorded at each encounter.

* Includes multiple ICPC-2 or ICPC-2 PLUS codes (see Appendix 3, <<http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10171>>).

Note: Shading indicates a significant difference between an ASGC and Australia (total sample). Darker shading indicates a higher than average result and lighter shading indicates a lower than average result. Results for chest pain NOS, Oral contraception and pregnancy have been included in this table for comparability with Table 6.4(a). RFEs—reasons for encounter; NOS—not otherwise specified.