



# Experiences in health care for people with chronic conditions: exploring the data on how GPs and other specialists communicate with their patients

Web report | Last updated: 14 Oct 2020 | Topic: [Health care quality & performance](#) |

## Citation

AIHW

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## About

Positive relationships with health care providers and care continuity are key to improving patients' health outcomes. This web report provides data on patients with chronic conditions experiences with their health providers, particularly with respect to whether or not GPs and other specialists communicated in a respectful and attentive way. Most people with chronic conditions reported positive experiences with their GPs and other specialists. However, younger patients and patients with mental health conditions reported less positive experiences.


More information on the topic, data and analysis is available in the accompanying main PDF report [Experiences in health care for people with chronic conditions: how GPs and other specialists communicate with their patients](#).

Cat. no: CHC 5

### Findings from this report:

- 7 in 10 patients with a mental health condition said that their specialists always listened carefully to them
  - 2 in 3 patients with a mental health condition said that their GPs always listened carefully to them
  - 1 in 20 patients with a mental health condition said that their GPs rarely or never spent enough time with them
  - 8 in 10 patients said that their specialists always listened carefully, showed respect and spent enough time with them
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## Introduction

Positive relationships with health care providers and continuity of care within the health system are key to improving health outcomes for patients. Patients who have positive experiences with their doctors - where the patient feels that they are taken seriously and that their values and preferences are taken into account - are more likely to maintain contact with their providers and the health system, adhere to treatment plans and have better health outcomes (Doyle et al. 2012) and are better able to manage their health (WHO 2016).

Patient-centred care approaches, such as encouraging regular contact, developing individualised care plans and involving patients in decisions about their care are particularly effective for improving the health outcomes of patients with chronic conditions (Poitras et al. 2018). Successful patient-centred care approaches are underpinned by good communication: having respectful, two-way conversations and spending adequate time with patients to address their issues and needs. Improving the health outcomes of people with chronic conditions requires an understanding of their current experiences in the health system and exploration of where those experiences could be improved.

### What is in this report?

The main PDF report and this accompanying web report aim to fill some of the existing gaps in information on patient experiences of care for two key groups of chronic conditions patients: patients with multiple chronic conditions and patients with mental health conditions. This work is guided by the following research questions:

- are people with chronic conditions having the kinds of experiences that reflect a relationship of trust and respect with their doctors?
- how do patient experiences vary depending on the number of conditions patients have, as well as with the presence of mental health conditions?
- how do patient experiences vary depending on selected sociodemographic characteristics?

The information in this web report should be looked at in conjunction with [\*Experiences in healthcare for people with chronic conditions: how GPs and other specialists communicate with their patients\*](#). The PDF report explores differences in patient experiences by patient characteristics and provides information to help users interpret the patient experience data.

### References

Doyle C, Lennox L, Bell D 2012. A systematic review of evidence on the links between patient experience and clinical safety and effectiveness. *BMJ Open* 2013(3). doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2012-001570

Poitras ME, Maltais ME, Bestard-Denommé L, Stewart M, Fortin M 2018. What are the effective elements in patient-centered and multimorbidity care? A scoping review. *BMC Health Services Research*. 18(1):446.

World Health Organization 2016. Patient engagement: technical series on safer primary care. Viewed 23 October 2019.

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## Exploring the patient experience data

These data focus on the interactions that patients have with their health providers - specifically how often their general practitioners and specialists communicated in a respectful and attentive way. The Patient Experience Survey 2017-18, which is the data source used for this analysis, asks three questions about respondents' recent experiences with their health care providers.

Thinking about all the GPs/medical specialists you have seen in the last 12 months...

- how often did they listen carefully to you?
- how often did they show respect for what you had to say?
- how often did they spend enough time with you?

Respondents indicated whether they had Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely or Never experienced these sorts of interactions.

The experiences that patients had with their GPs and specialists in 2017-18 varied according to their age, sex, where they lived, their level of socioeconomic disadvantage, and their health.

### Explore the data

Use the interactive data visualisation below to explore patient experiences for all respondents, by the number of reported chronic conditions and for respondents who reported having a mental health condition. All percentage estimates are reported with a 95% confidence interval (CI). Hover over the *Notes for interpreting the data* in the bottom right hand corner of the visualisation for detailed technical notes.

Data visualisation showing patient experiences 2017-18.

All Patients

No. of chronic conditions

Mental health

#### Patient experiences | 2017-18

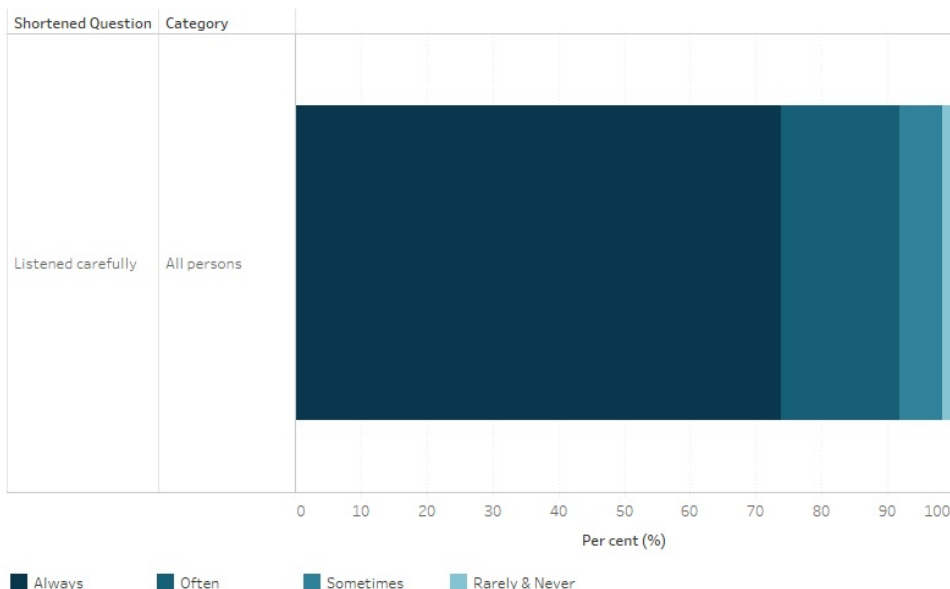
Medical Professional  
General Practitioner(s)

Breakdown  
(All)

Category  
All

Question  
Listened carefully to the patient


Response  
All (no CIs shown)



Source: ABS Patient Experience Survey 2017-18, customised report

[Notes for interpreting the data](#)

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## Notes

### Data quality statement

Information on data quality can be found on the ABS website:

- [Quality Declaration \(summary\)](#)
  - [Data Quality \(Technical Note\)](#).
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## Data

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Data tables: [Experiences with GPs and specialists for people with chronic conditions, 2017-18](#)

### Data

Download Data tables: [Experiences with GPs and specialists for people with chronic conditions, 2017-18. Format: XLSX 296Kb](#) XLSX 296Kb

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## Related material

### Latest related reports

- Experiences in health care for people with chronic conditions: How GPs and other specialists communicate with their patients | **Publication** | 14 Oct 2020
- Coordination of health care: experiences of barriers to accessing health services among patients aged 45 and over | **Publication** | 10 Mar 2020
- Patient experiences in Australia by small geographic areas in 2017-18 | **Web report** | 25 Feb 2020
- Coordination of health care: experiences of information sharing between providers for patients | **Publication** | 05 Jul 2019
- Coordination of health care - experiences with GP care among patients aged 45 and over 2016 | **Publication** | 26 Jul 2018

### Related topics

- [Chronic disease](#)
  - [Medical specialists](#)
  - [Mental health](#)
  - [Primary health care](#)
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