

Older Australians' experiences of cost preventing healthcare access

Pensioner status

National Seniors Australia asked 5,419 older people about 10 types of healthcare and whether cost had stopped them from accessing the care they needed in recent times.

Within the group we then compared respondents whose only income was the Age Pension or another government pension, payment or allowance versus respondents who received any income from other sources such as super or wages.

The results show that a much larger proportion of people solely dependent on government payments went without all kinds of healthcare because of cost.

The data are drawn from the National Seniors Social Survey conducted in February 2023. It was open to anyone aged 50 or over residing in Australia. For each healthcare type, we asked respondents if they had gone without it because of cost on one or more occasions in recent years. We also asked them to indicate their income source(s). For all comparisons, the 'only pension income' group comprised between 11.8% and 13.7% of the total. Healthcare items respondents did not need (marked 'not applicable' by them) were excluded from calculations. Access full data tables [here](#) and the original healthcare costs report [here](#).

Cost prevented access to ...



prescription medication

11%

4%



GP appointment

16%

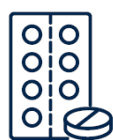
6%



medical treatment

23%

8%



non-prescription medication

28%

9%



specialist appointment

34%

12%



allied health appointment

33%

16%



other healthcare

40%

15%



dental checkup

46%

16%



dental treatment

51%

20%



mental health appointment

46%

22%

ONLY PENSION INCOME

OTHER INCOME