



Outreach
in the Outback
Rural Health West

Specialist Services in Rural Western Australia Gap and Equity Analysis Update

March 2016

Rural Health West

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Limitations

Rural Health West acknowledges there are limitations with data collection for various reasons. These include the modelling assumptions made around full time specialist work and limited capacity to reflect inequities within regions. The information in this report is a snapshot in time and was current at March 2016.

Website

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Abbreviations

FT full time
GOL Goldfields
GTS Great Southern
MID Midwest
OITO Outreach in the Outback
PIL Pilbara

1 Introduction

Rural Health West undertakes regular assessment of equity of access to, and gaps in, specialist services available to residents in each rural region of Western Australia. In March 2010, Rural Health West undertook the first gap and equity analysis to support priority setting for the then new Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program – Indigenous Chronic Disease stream. Subsequent updates of this analysis support the continuous planning of Rural Health West's current outreach specialist service programs by providing vital information regarding service needs of each region. The data included in this report represents a snapshot of all resident and visiting specialists in each region as at 3 March 2016.

2 Purpose

To provide a tool to support funding and resource allocation decisions for the outreach specialist programs funded by the Australian Government and managed by Rural Health West.

3 Methodology – determining equity

The number of sessions¹ provided on a per annum basis by all resident, private and visiting specialist services in each of the seven rural regions in Western Australia has been collated to determine regional access rates to individual specialties, with equity being defined as the comparative quantum of specialist sessions delivered to a region per annum per 1,000 population basis. The exercise is a snapshot in time at 3 March 2016 and no weighting has been given to burden of disease.

This information is summarised in charts on the following pages. Paediatric and adult specialist services have been summarised together where data was available, except for general paediatrics and psychiatry. Not every specialty is included in the report due to a lack of significant data available or because they are not specialties funded through Rural Health West's outreach programs.

4 Modelling resident specialist activity

The modelling assumptions that have been made in determining the level of resident specialist activity are:

- A full time private or salaried resident specialist (or locum filling the position) works 44 weeks per year at 10 sessions per week = full time equivalent of 440 sessions per annum.
- Where full time resident specialists are separately funded to provide outreach or visiting services, the number of funded sessions is deducted from their full time equivalent sessions.

¹ A session is defined as 3.5 to 4 hours of clinical time

5 Rural regions

This analysis continues its assessment of equity within the seven rural regions historically used by the WA Country Health Service, Government of Western Australia (WACHS). The 2014 population breakdown in each of the regions were as follows:

Rural region	Adult population	0-14 years population	Females 15-54 years population	Total population 2014
Goldfields	48,265	13,072	16,731	61,337
Great Southern	47,973	11,958	14,769	59,931
Kimberley	30,037	9,062	11,518	39,099
Midwest	54,208	13,934	17,457	68,142
Pilbara	55,771	11,732	16,867	67,503
South West	141,212	36,841	46,156	178,053
Wheatbelt	62,806	15,315	18,050	78,121

6 Information sources

This Gap and Equity Analysis Update identifies key specialist services provided across the seven rural regions. To achieve the best possible outcomes, the development of the dataset has relied on written, verbal and digital information. Written information was collected from the *Medical & Surgical Specialist Referral Directory (Western Australia) 2016*; and the Australian Bureau of Statistics' estimated resident population data 2014 (document 3235.0 *Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, Table 6*). Verbal information was obtained from WACHS regional specialist coordinators, specialist's private rooms, other relevant WACHS staff and OITO Program staff.

Digital information has been collected from the Rural Health West specialist database and the new Outreach Management System (OMS). The OMS is an efficient online platform through which outreach health service providers contracted by Rural Health West can supply up to date visit schedules and submit service reports.

7 Definition of terms

Resident specialists

Resident specialists refer to those who live in the rural or remote location in which they work and usually reside in the town where the regional resource centre is located. Resident specialists provide outreach services to other towns and communities within their region.

Visiting specialists

Visiting specialists refer to those who travel from their base (usually Perth, but could be from another rural region or interstate) to deliver occasional planned specialist services in a rural or remote location.

8 Specialties identified

The following specialties are reported here:

Children's specialist services

Paediatrics – general

Paediatrics – psychiatry (child and youth)

Combined specialist services

Differentiation not possible for Endocrinology (adult and child) and Ear, Nose and Throat (adult and child).

Adult specialist services

Cardiology (adult and echo)

Dermatology

Gastroenterology

General medicine

General surgery

Genetics

Immunology (includes sexual health)

Nephrology

Neurology

Obstetrics and gynaecology

Oncology

Ophthalmology

Orthopaedics

Palliative care

Plastic/Reconstructive surgery

Psychiatry

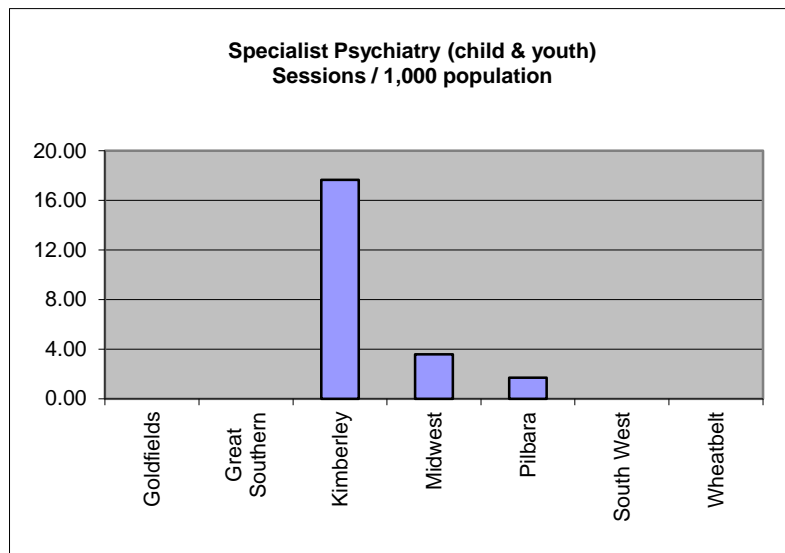
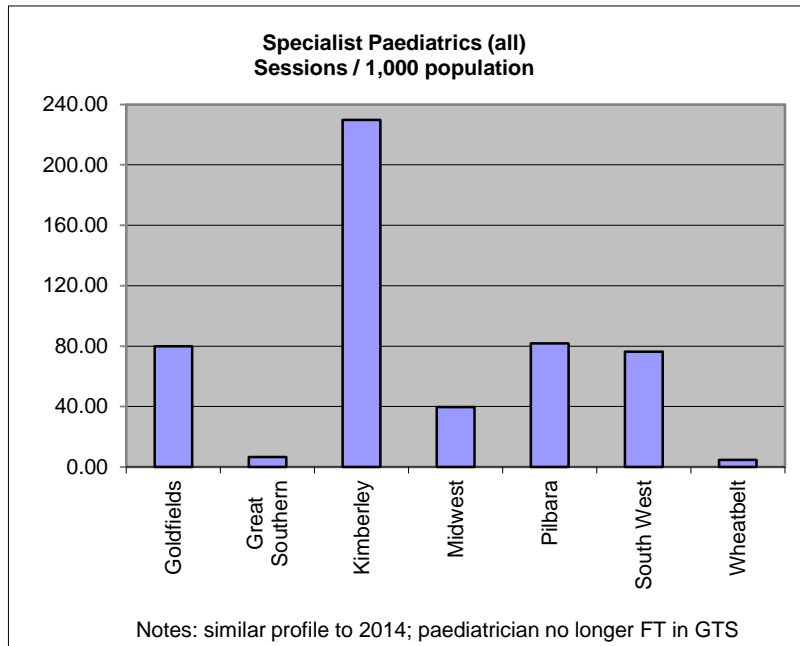
Respiratory medicine

Rheumatology

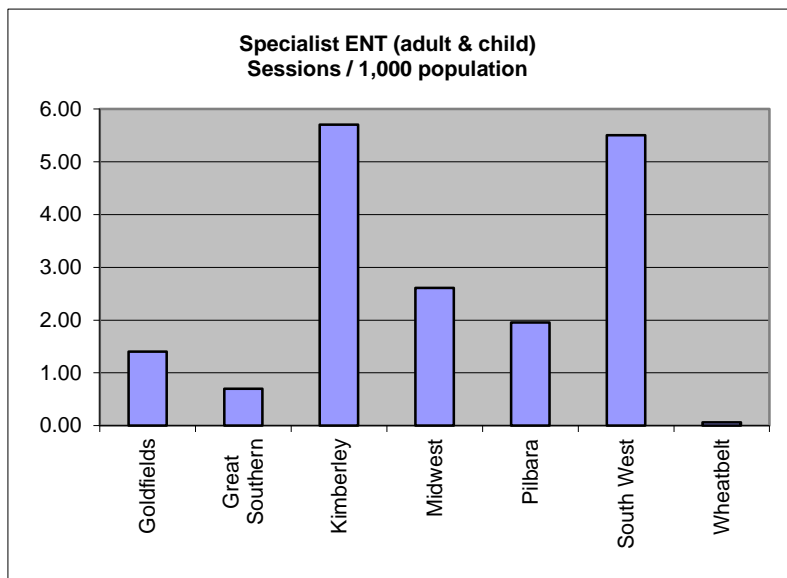
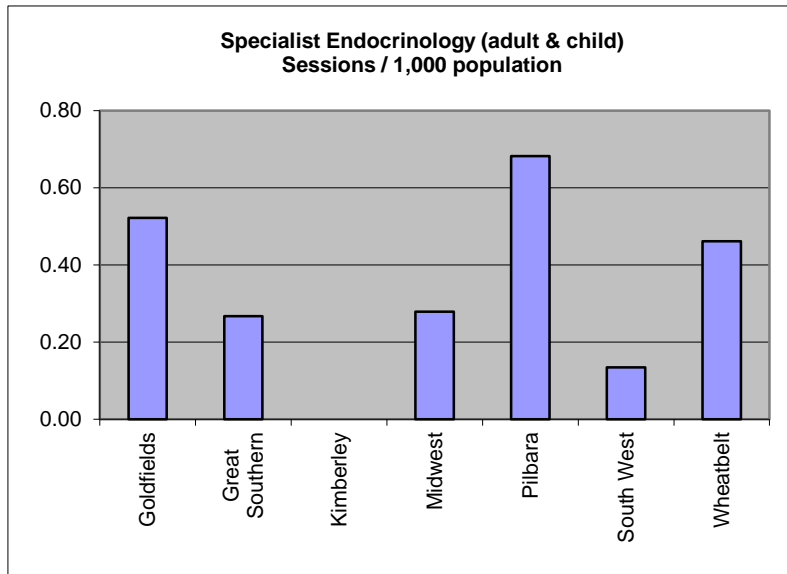
Urology

Vascular surgery

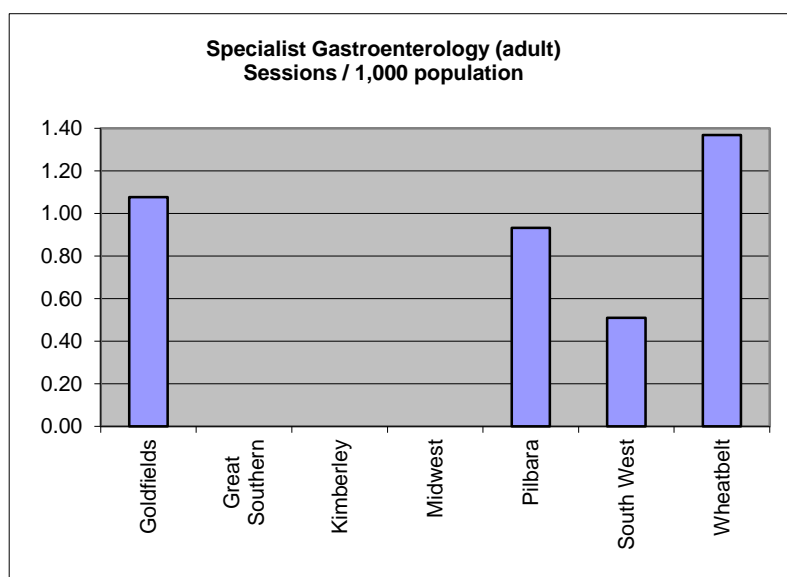
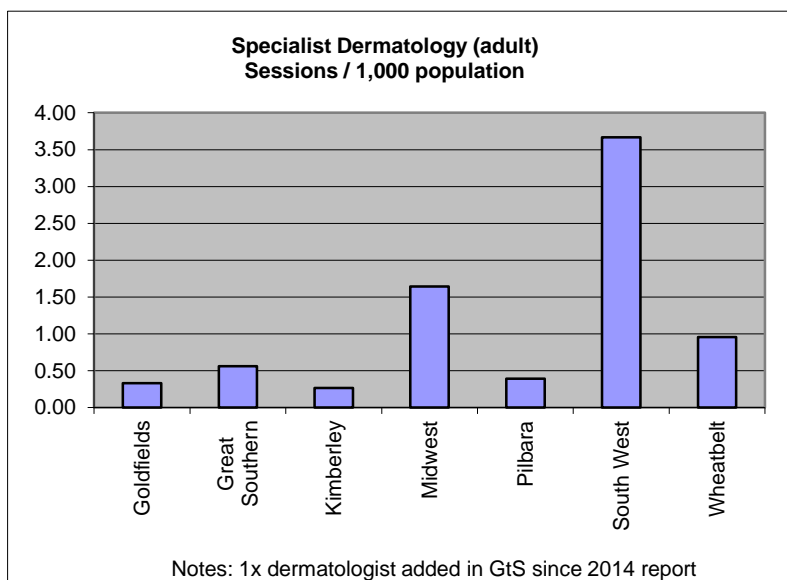
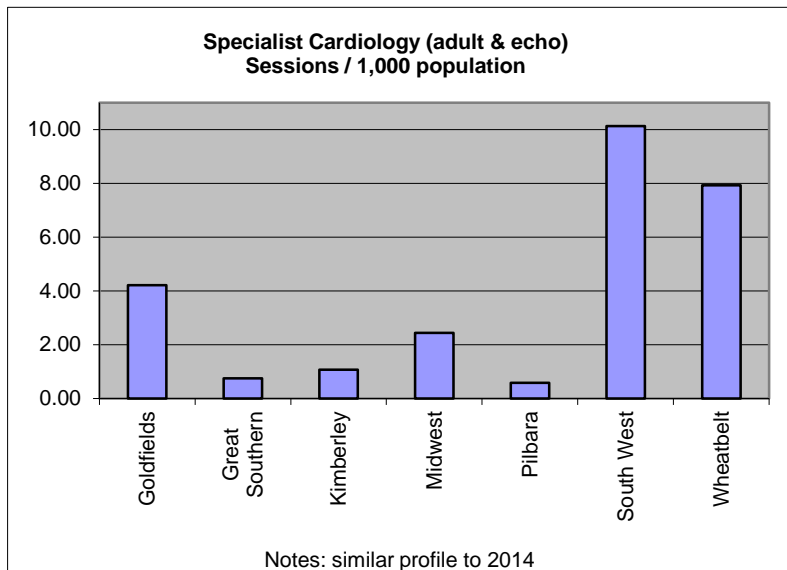
9 Equity of access- paediatric services

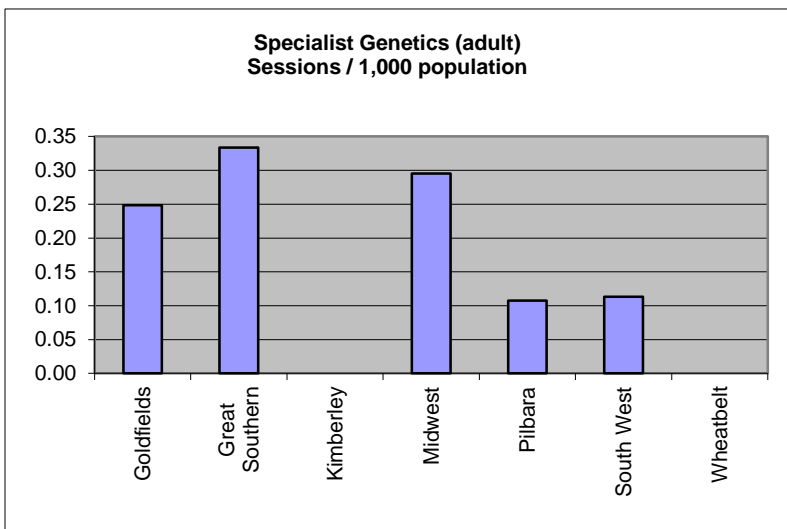
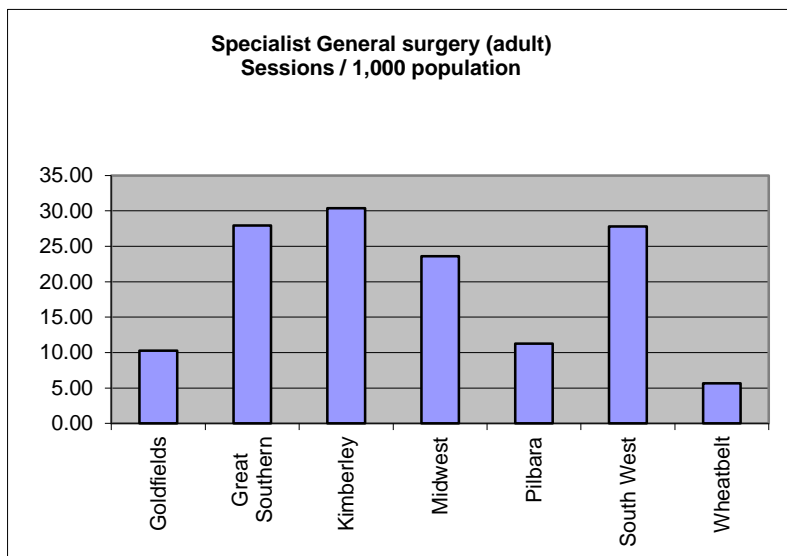
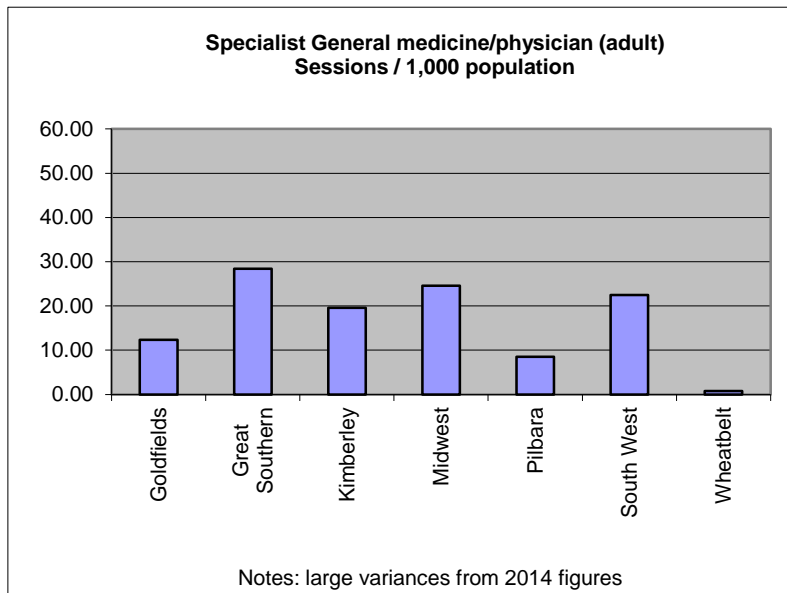


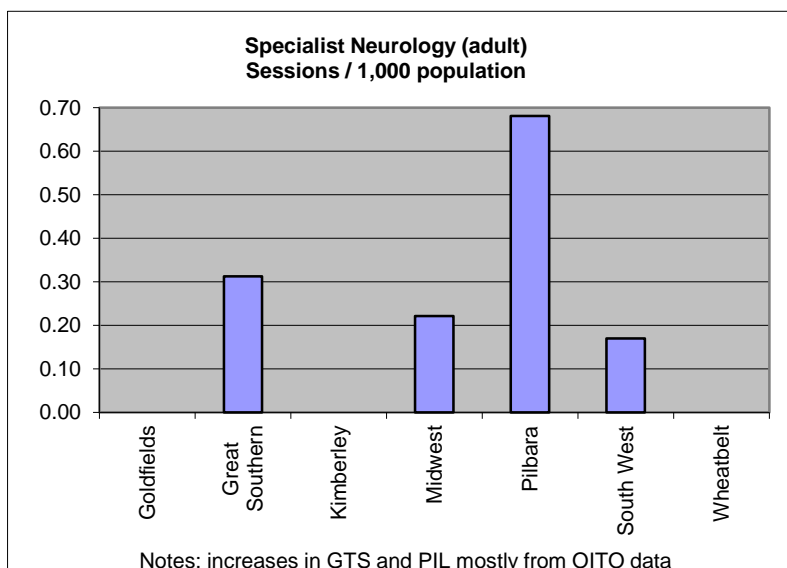
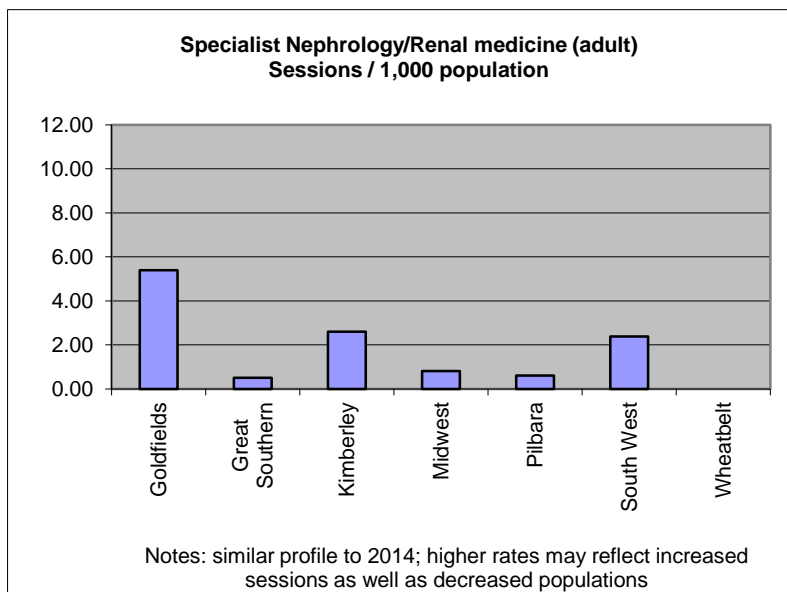
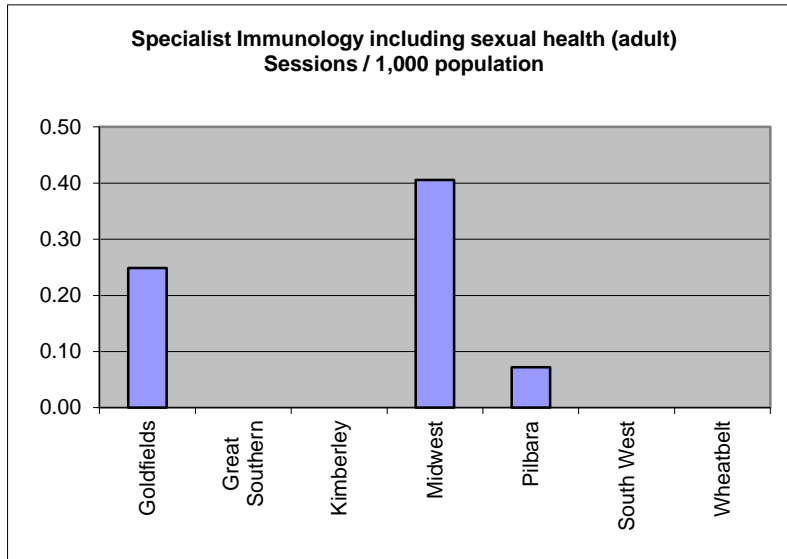
10 Equity of access – combined services

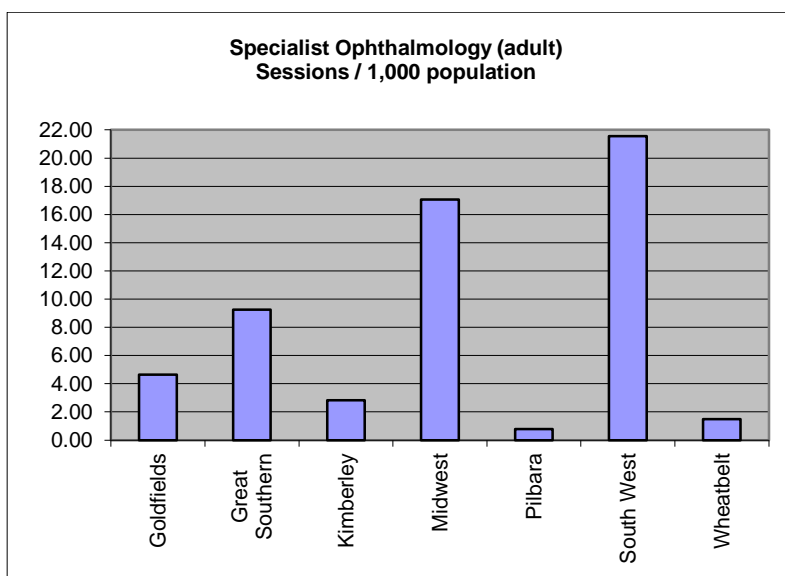
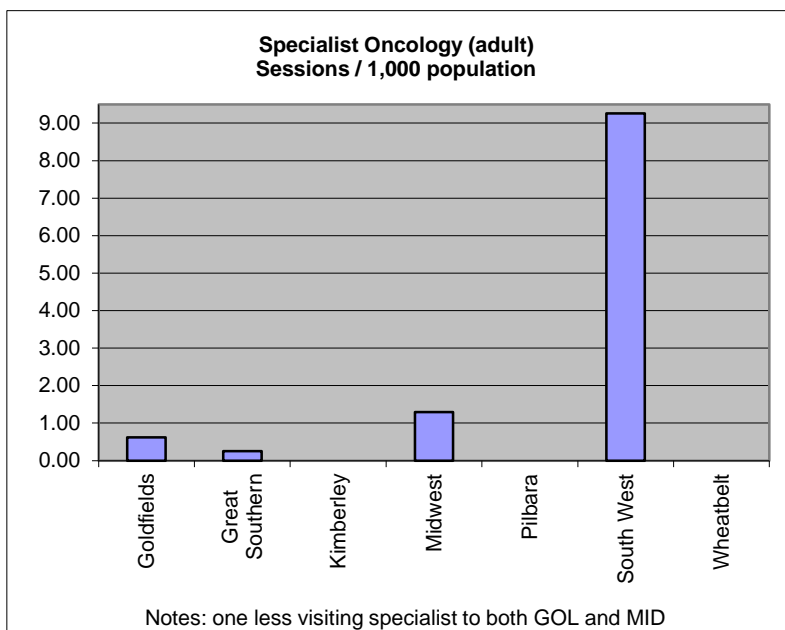
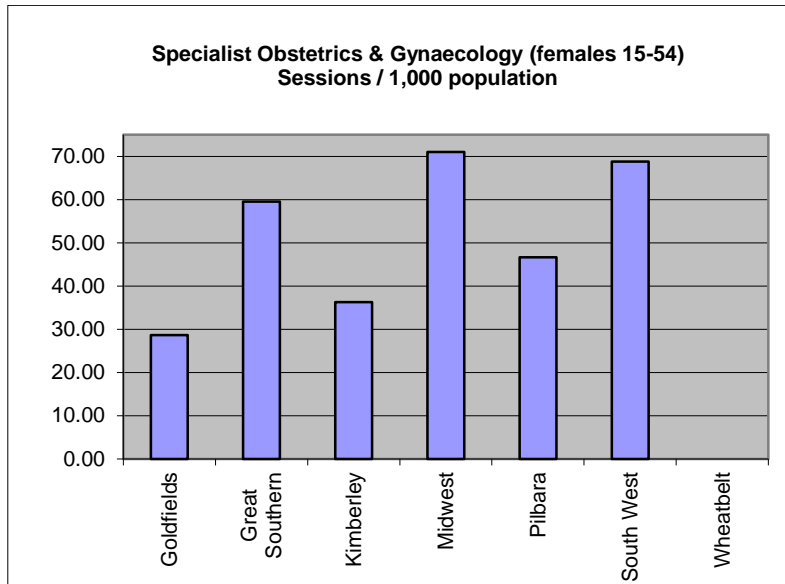


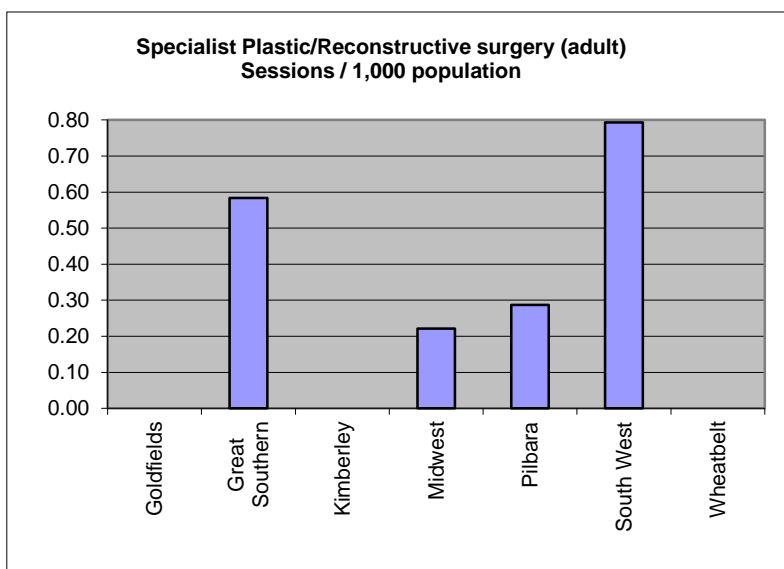
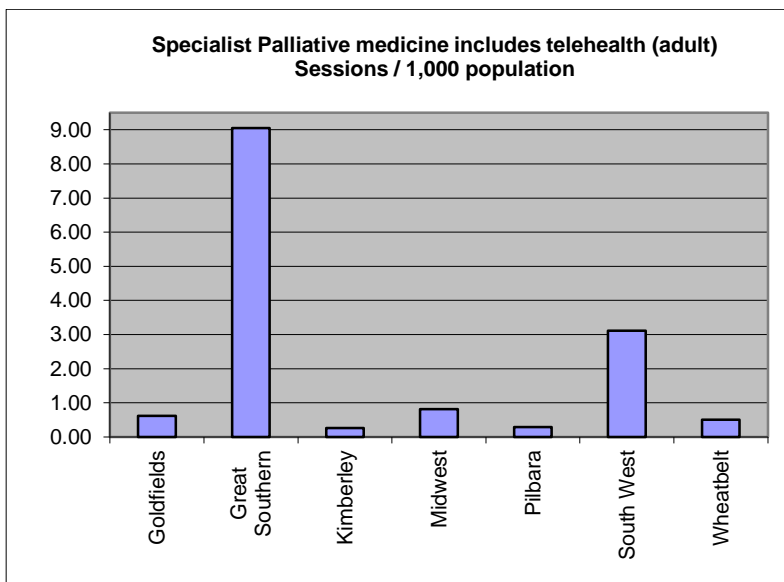
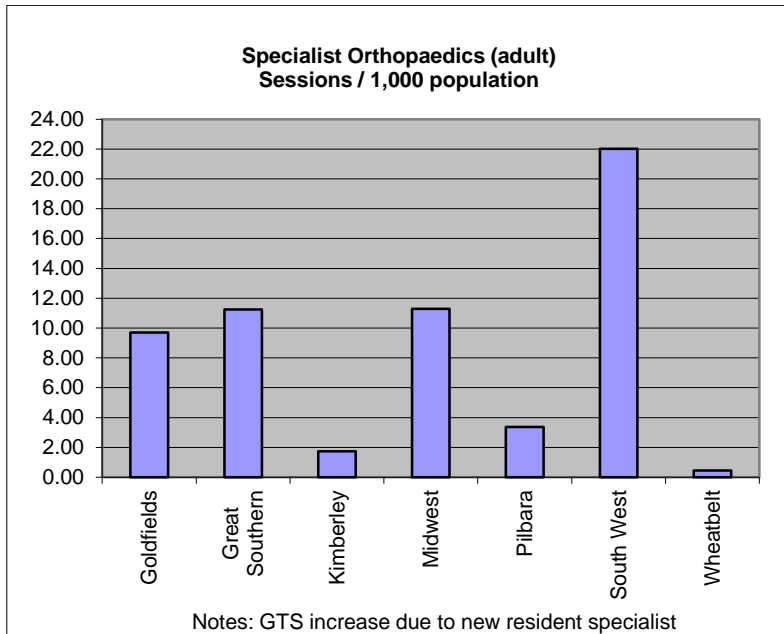
11 Equity of access – adult services

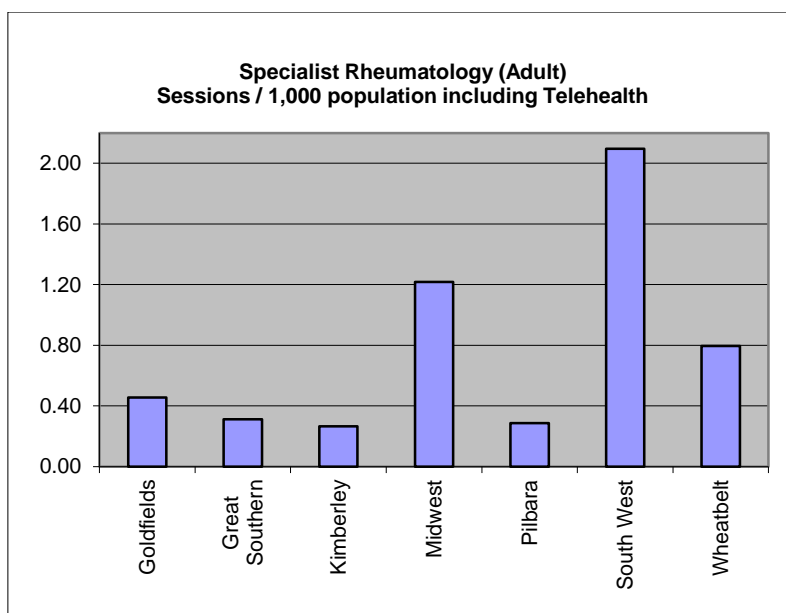
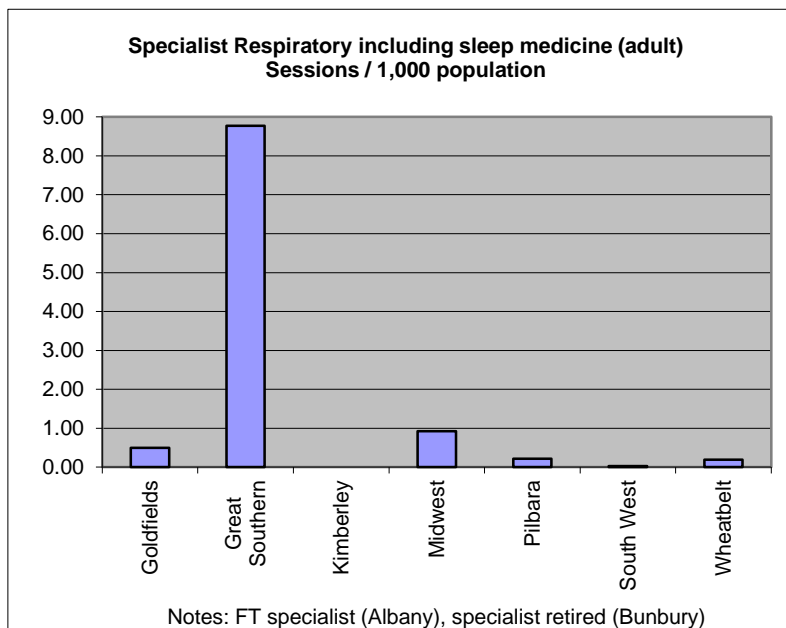
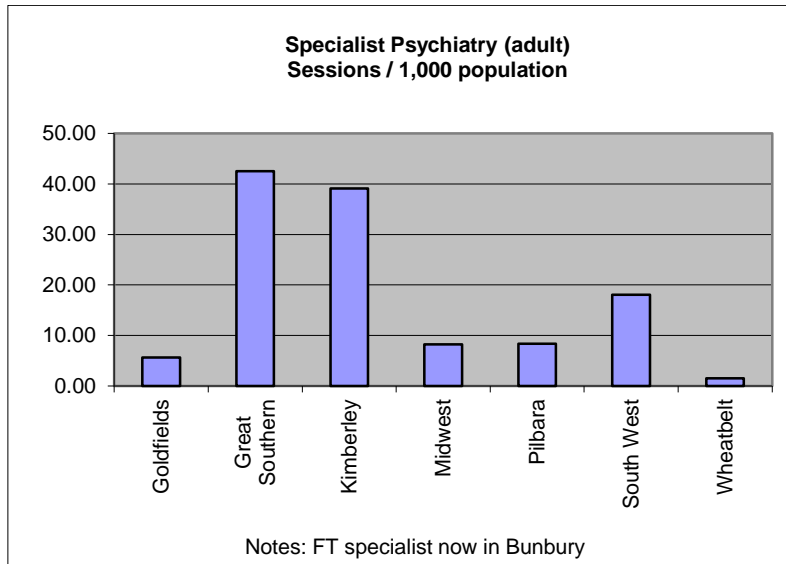


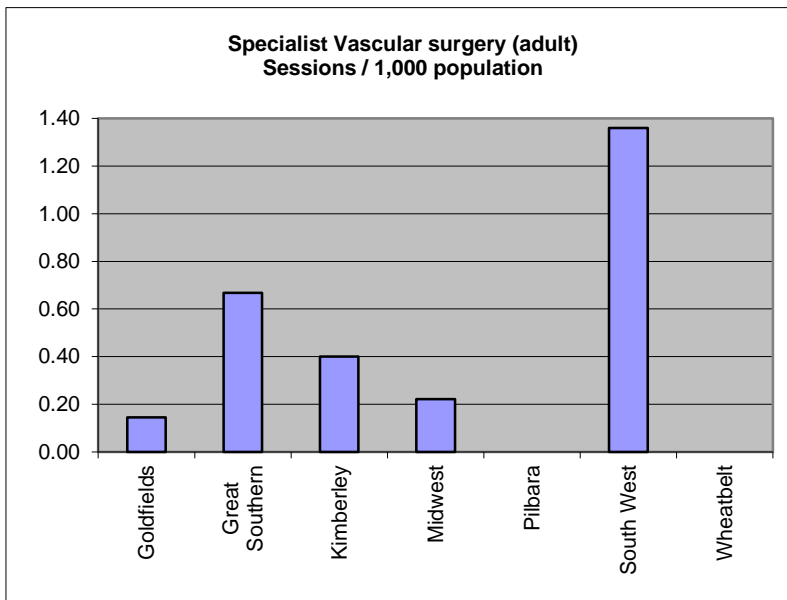
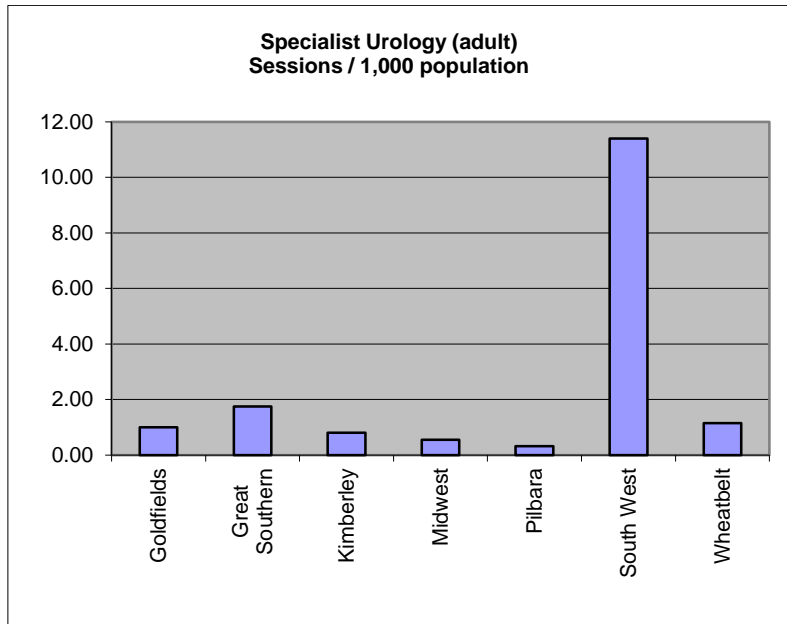












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