

**CHRIS BOWEN MP  
MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES  
MINISTER FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES, SUPERANNUATION &  
CORPORATE LAW**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

22 December 2009

**INTEGRATED ELECTRONIC MEDICARE CLAIMING PROVES AN  
EARLY SUCCESS**

The Minister for Human Services, Chris Bowen MP, today announced Medicare Australia has reached a new milestone for patient electronic claiming, with one in four rebates now claimed at medical practices.

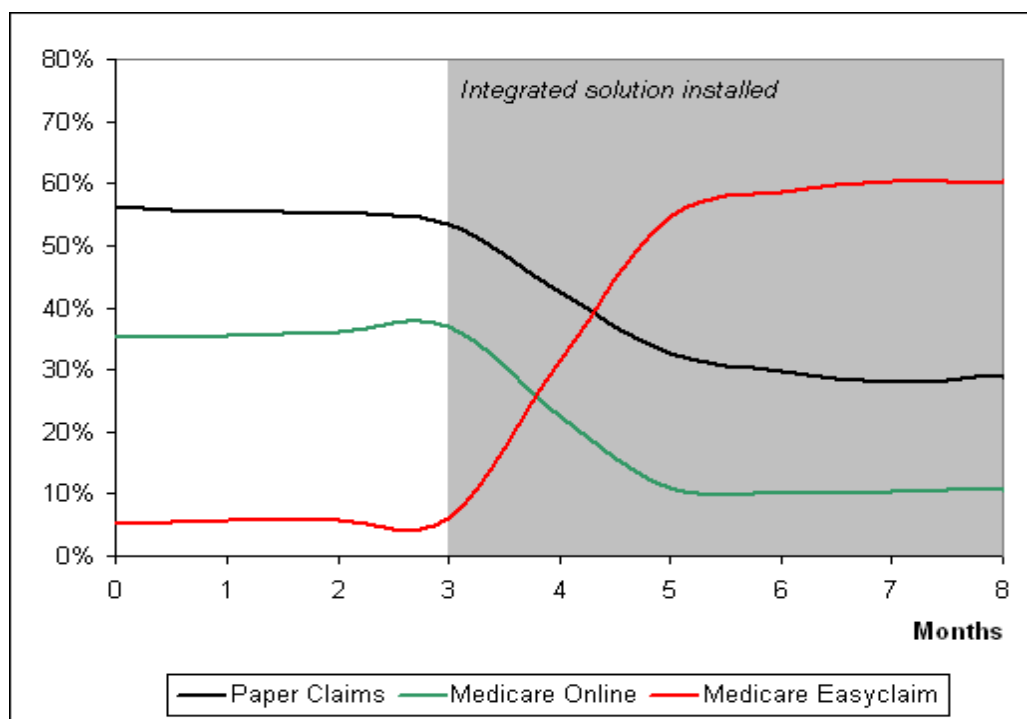
Last month, more than one million services were processed using Medicare Easyclaim from over 15,440 providers across Australia, which is up from approximately 560,000 services from 8,132 medical providers in April 2009, before the Government's integration support package was implemented.

"For the public, integrated electronic claiming means they are saved a trip to a Medicare office to make a patient claim – this is particularly important for the elderly, those with young children and those living in regional areas," Mr Bowen said.

Practices using Medicare Easyclaim integrated with their practice management software are now transmitting almost 70 per cent of patient claims electronically.

Data collected over the last six months shows that a practice is likely to achieve that level of electronic patient claiming within just two months of installing an integrated solution.

**Average electronic patient claiming following installation of integrated Medicare Easyclaim**



“This growth indicates that the Australian Government’s \$6 million package to support integration has succeeded in making the Medicare Easyclaim technology more usable for medical practices,” Mr Bowen said.

Medicare Easyclaim is an EFTPOS-enabled electronic claiming channel that enables patients to receive on-the-spot Medicare rebates into their bank accounts without having to visit a Medicare office.

Medical practices and peak bodies had indicated that a lack of integration of Medicare Easyclaim into medical practice software was a key obstacle to its success.

The Government’s integration support package facilitated the design, development and rollout of four solutions to integrate Medicare Easyclaim with medical practice software, with more integrated solutions expected to be rolled out next year.

Medicare Australia research has found 80 per cent of people who pay to see their GP would like the choice of being able to claim their Medicare rebate on-the-spot and 2.7 million Australians have now registered their bank account details to speed up the process of claiming at the doctor’s.

As Medicare offices will shut for several days over Christmas, people should be reminded to ask their medical practice if they offer electronic claiming and how they can use it.

Medicare offices and public call centres will close at 4pm on Christmas Eve and reopen on Wednesday 30 December. They will also be closed on New Year’s Day.

Medicare Australia’s Online Services will continue to operate uninterrupted over Christmas and New Year for people who wanted to view, update and request some of their information held by Medicare Australia.

*Media Contact – James Cullen 0409 719 879*

## ATTACHMENT

### Growth of electronic patient claiming

Month	Patient claims lodged electronically*	Providers that transmitted patient claims electronically*
Nov 2007	9.75 %	7,983
Nov 2008	15.14 %	14,328
Nov 2009	26.12 %	21,932

\* Through Medicare Easyclaim or Medicare Online channels