



# Child Care and Early Learning in Summary

March quarter 2014



This publication provides information on children in approved child care services across Australia for the March quarter 2014.

**Key findings for the March quarter 2014 include:**

- 1,127,730 children attended approved child care, up 8.2 per cent compared with the March quarter 2013.
- 776,330 families had at least one child in approved child care, an increase of 6.4 per cent since the March quarter 2013.
- 16,207 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 4.9 per cent since the March quarter 2013.
- The total estimated Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate entitlement was \$1,288.1 million, up 18.8 per cent since the March quarter 2013.

## Introduction

This report presents information on the numbers of children and families using approved child care, the costs of care and the numbers and types of child care services in Australia. It includes data from the Child Care Management System (CCMS), MyChild website, Department of Human Services and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

During the March quarter 2014, 776,330 families used approved child care services for their 1,127,730 children.

- In terms of affordability, more than 90 per cent of these families are estimated to have received Child Care Rebate (CCR), with up to 50 per cent of their out-of-pocket costs covered by the Australian Government.
- In terms of availability, in the March quarter 2014, there were 16,207 services providing approved child care services across Australia with more than one third (5,553 or 34.3 per cent) of these located in New South Wales.

**Table 1: Child care children, families, services and estimated entitlements by state and territory, March quarter 2014**

State and territory	Number of children using approved child care <sup>1</sup>	Number of families using approved child care <sup>1</sup>	Number of approved child care services	Estimated Child Care Benefit (CCB) entitlement <sup>1</sup> ('000)	Estimated Child Care Rebate (CCR) entitlement <sup>1</sup> ('000)	Estimated number of families receiving CCR <sup>1</sup>
NSW	366,440	258,800	5,553	\$200,433	\$218,833	234,340
Vic.	276,070	184,330	3,735	\$198,533	\$161,318	170,810
Qld	268,270	182,350	3,389	\$159,232	\$132,767	167,070
SA	81,630	55,210	1,245	\$39,769	\$33,515	51,390
WA	85,700	61,300	1,406	\$38,562	\$49,701	56,700
Tas.	22,610	15,490	372	\$10,546	\$8,771	14,240
NT	8,670	6,230	176	\$3,282	\$6,797	6,040
ACT	23,830	16,610	331	\$5,846	\$20,157	16,180
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1,127,730</b>	<b>776,330</b>	<b>16,207</b>	<b>\$656,203</b>	<b>\$631,858</b>	<b>713,120</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families and children may use services in more than one state or territory and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

## Child Care Usage

### Children

During the March quarter 2014, 1,127,730 children used approved child care in Australia, up by 8.2 per cent since the March quarter 2013. For children aged 0–12 years using approved child care, this represents 29.2 per cent of the 3,807,762 children aged 0–12 years in Australia.

During the March quarter 2014, children attended various services providing approved child care, including Long Day Care (641,740 or 56.9 per cent), Outside School Hours Care (354,020 or 31.4 per cent), Family Day Care and In-Home Care (179,200 or 15.9 per cent), and Occasional Care (6,920 or 0.6 per cent).

**Table 2: Number of children using child care by service type, March quarter 2013 to March quarter 2014**

Service type	Mar. 13	Jun. 13	Sep. 13	Dec. 13	Mar. 14
Long Day Care	621,250	606,710	637,590	646,750	641,740
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	135,770	142,400	155,430	165,440	179,200
Occasional Care	7,130	7,650	8,260	8,130	6,920
Outside School Hours Care	327,220	334,480	345,160	335,110	354,020
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1,042,280</b>	<b>1,057,900</b>	<b>1,111,100</b>	<b>1,120,880</b>	<b>1,127,730</b>
<i>Per cent of Australian population<sup>2</sup></i>	27.1%	27.2%	28.9%	29.0%	29.2%

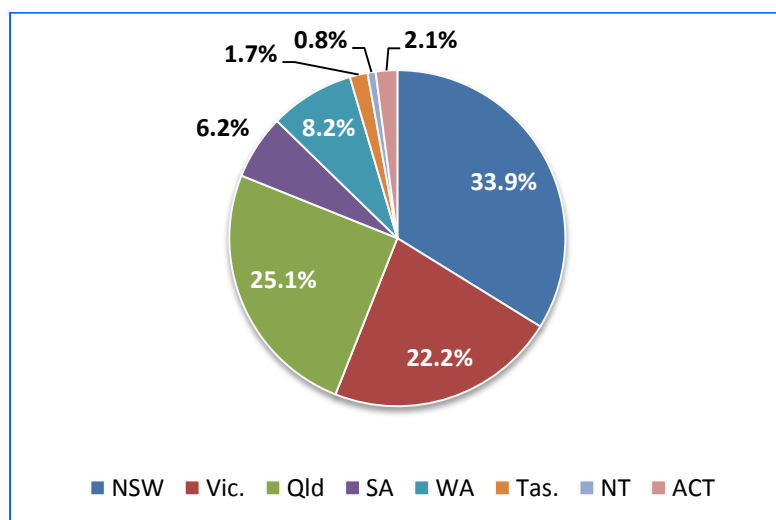
<sup>1</sup> As children may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

<sup>2</sup> Number of children aged 0–12 years using approved child care as a proportion of all Australian children aged 0–12 years.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data, ABS Cat. No. 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics, Dec. 2013.

In the March quarter 2014, the largest proportion of children attending Long Day Care was in New South Wales (33.9 per cent), followed by Queensland (25.1 per cent) and Victoria (22.2 per cent).

**Figure 1: Children using Long Day Care by state and territory, March quarter 2014**



Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

**Table 3: Number of children using child care by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2014**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	217,390	142,690	161,150	39,940	52,410	11,030	4,990	13,330	<b>641,740</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	56,380	63,230	33,880	10,390	10,610	5,480	520	1,790	<b>179,200</b>
Occasional Care	2,400	2,440	630	100	1,000	140	0	210	<b>6,920</b>
Outside School Hours Care	106,950	79,280	85,870	34,890	26,600	7,690	3,490	9,520	<b>354,020</b>
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>366,440</b>	<b>276,070</b>	<b>268,270</b>	<b>81,630</b>	<b>85,700</b>	<b>22,610</b>	<b>8,670</b>	<b>23,830</b>	<b>1,127,730</b>

<sup>1</sup> As children may use more than one service type in more than one state or territory in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

While most children who used approved child care, used services located in major cities (868,830 children), around one in four (266,440 or 23.6 per cent) children used services located in regional and remote areas.

**Table 4: Number of children using child care by service type and region, March quarter 2014**

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional <sup>1</sup> and Remote Australia <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>3</sup>
Long Day Care	482,020	162,030	<b>641,740</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	136,040	43,940	<b>179,200</b>
Occasional Care	4,150	2,770	<b>6,920</b>
Outside School Hours Care	285,720	69,200	<b>354,020</b>
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>868,830</b>	<b>266,440</b>	<b>1,127,730</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes Inner and Outer Regional

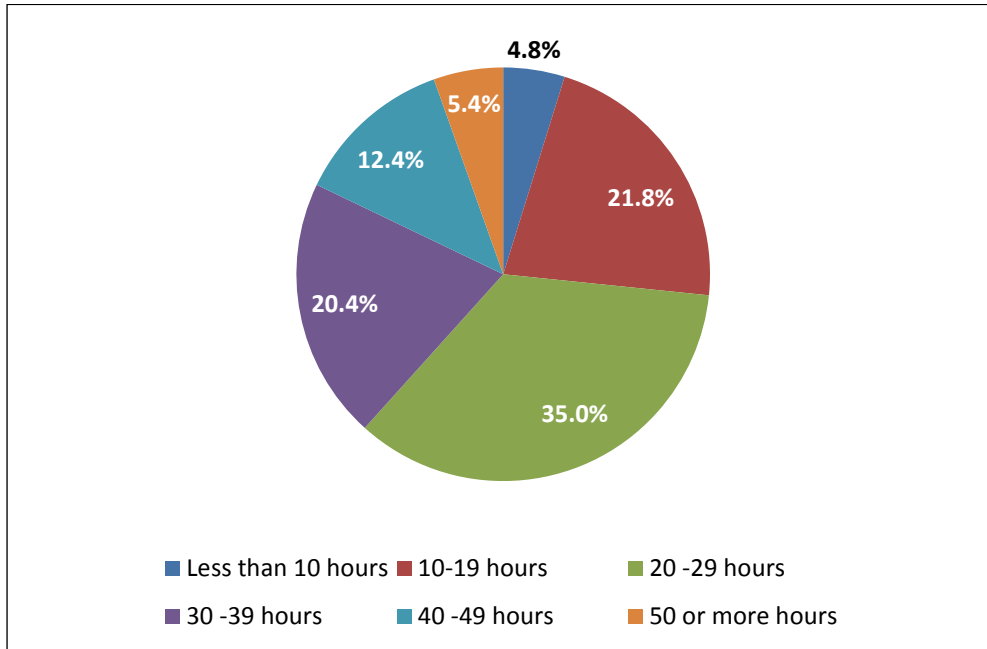
<sup>2</sup> Includes Remote and Very Remote

<sup>3</sup> As children may use more than one service type in more than one region in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

During the March quarter 2014, for all types of child care, the average time that a child spent in approved child care was 25.0 hours per week. This compares with children who used Long Day Care who attended for an average of 27.8 hours per week.

**Figure 2: Children using Long Day Care by average hours per week, March quarter 2014**



Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

**Table 5: Average weekly hours in child care by service type, March quarter 2013 to March quarter 2014**

Service type	Mar. 13	Jun. 13	Sep. 13	Dec. 13	Mar. 14
Long Day Care	27.4	27.2	27.7	27.5	27.8
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	26.7	27.0	28.2	29.3	31.3
Occasional Care	11.2	10.9	11.2	11.2	11.8
Outside School Hours Care	12.2	10.8	11.3	10.7	12.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>25.0</b>

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

## Families

During the March quarter 2014, there were 776,330 families using some form of approved child care for their children, an increase of 6.4 per cent since the March quarter 2013. The number of families using Family Day Care has increased by 22.6 per cent since the March quarter 2013.

**Table 6: Number of families using child care by service type, March quarter 2013 to March quarter 2014**

Service type	Mar. 13	Jun. 13	Sep. 13	Dec. 13	Mar. 14
Long Day Care	500,180	498,010	519,130	524,070	517,770
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	84,930	88,130	94,880	98,770	104,130
Occasional Care	5,930	6,400	6,830	6,690	5,840
Outside School Hours Care	231,970	238,600	246,510	239,780	250,370
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>729,780</b>	<b>742,690</b>	<b>773,070</b>	<b>776,790</b>	<b>776,330</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

In the March quarter 2014, 258,800 families (33.3 per cent) had children attending approved child care in New South Wales, followed by Victoria (184,330 families or 23.7 per cent) and Queensland (182,350 families or 23.5 per cent).

Across Australia, two-thirds (517,770 or 66.7 per cent) of all families had children in Long Day Care and around one-third of families had children in Outside School Hours Care (250,370 or 32.3 per cent).

**Table 7: Number of families using child care by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2014**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	178,650	115,950	125,010	32,750	42,450	8,940	4,170	10,850	<b>517,770</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	35,350	32,110	20,680	5,990	6,560	3,660	400	1,220	<b>104,130</b>
Occasional Care	2,020	2,070	540	90	830	110	0	170	<b>5,840</b>
Outside School Hours Care	76,500	56,950	59,540	24,120	18,660	5,370	2,520	6,910	<b>250,370</b>
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>258,800</b>	<b>184,330</b>	<b>182,350</b>	<b>55,210</b>	<b>61,300</b>	<b>15,490</b>	<b>6,230</b>	<b>16,610</b>	<b>776,330</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families may use more than one service type in more than one state or territory in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

## Indigenous children and families

During the March quarter 2014, 27,490 Indigenous children (2.4 per cent of all children) used approved child care in Australia. The number of Indigenous children using approved child care has decreased slightly since the March quarter 2013 (down by 0.4 per cent).

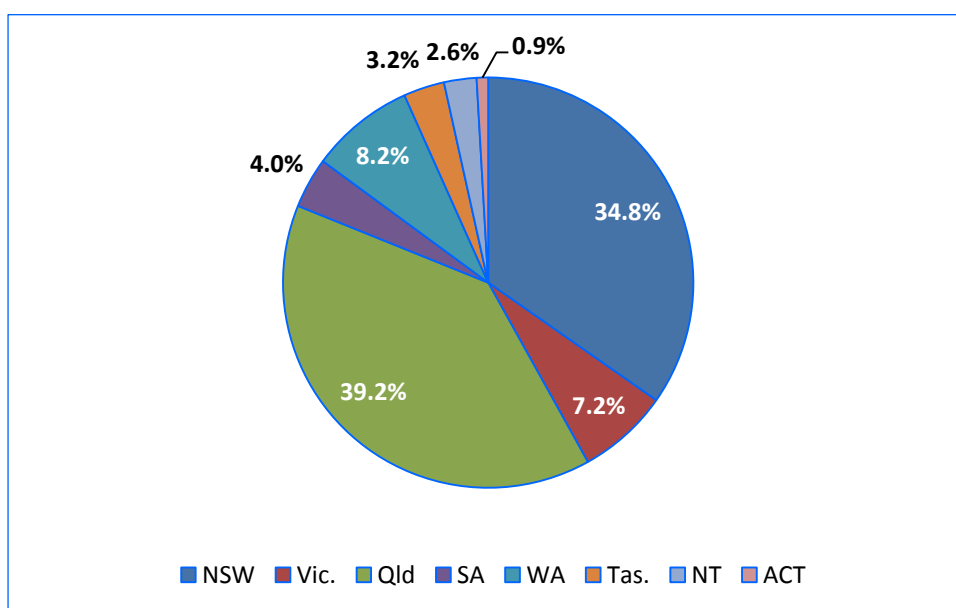
**Table 8: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type, March quarter 2013 to March quarter 2014**

Service type	Mar. 13	Jun. 13	Sep. 13	Dec. 13	Mar. 14
Long Day Care	18,100	17,640	18,230	17,990	17,570
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	3,600	3,550	3,660	3,730	3,810
Occasional Care	200	210	210	200	180
Outside School Hours Care	6,810	6,990	7,090	6,770	7,130
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>27,600</b>	<b>27,570</b>	<b>28,350</b>	<b>27,910</b>	<b>27,490</b>

<sup>1</sup> As children may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.  
Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

The largest proportion of Indigenous children attending Long Day Care was in Queensland (39.2 per cent) and New South Wales (34.8 per cent).

**Figure 3: Indigenous children using Long Day Care by state and territory, March quarter 2014**



Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

Compared with all children, a smaller proportion of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years attended approved child care, in each state and territory (12.8 per cent of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years, and 29.2 per cent all children aged 0–12 years, nationally).

**Table 9: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2014**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	6,110	1,270	6,900	700	1,450	570	450	160	<b>17,570</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,600	360	1,090	160	200	360	30	30	<b>3,810</b>
Occasional Care	100	30	20	0	20	10	0	<10	<b>180</b>
Outside School Hours Care	1,970	560	2,690	520	530	370	400	100	<b>7,130</b>
<b>Total Indigenous children using approved child care<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>9,360</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>10,300</b>	<b>1,330</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>1,210</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>27,490</b>
<i>Per cent of Indigenous population<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>14.1%</i>	<i>14.1%</i>	<i>16.0%</i>	<i>11.4%</i>	<i>7.7%</i>	<i>15.8%</i>	<i>4.3%</i>	<i>16.2%</i>	<i>12.8%</i>

<sup>1</sup> As children may use more than one service type and use services in more than one state or territory in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

<sup>2</sup> Number of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years using approved child care as a proportion of all Indigenous children aged 0–12 years.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data and ABS Cat. No. 3238.0 Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 2001 to 2026.

More than half of all Indigenous children who attended child care did so in regional or remote Australia (14,640 children or 53.3 per cent).

**Table 10: Number of Indigenous children using child care by region, March quarter 2014**

Service type	Major cities of Australia	Regional and Remote Australia	Total <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	8,230	9,440	<b>17,570</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,600	2,240	<b>3,810</b>
Occasional Care	70	110	<b>180</b>
Outside School Hours Care	3,720	3,440	<b>7,130</b>
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>13,110</b>	<b>14,640</b>	<b>27,490</b>

<sup>1</sup> As children may use more than one service type and use services in more than one region and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.



During the March quarter 2014, 18,260 Indigenous families used approved child care, a reduction of 620 families or 3.2 per cent since the March quarter 2013.

**Table 11: Number of Indigenous families using child care by service type, March quarter 2013 to March quarter 2014**

Service type	Mar. 13	Jun. 13	Sep. 13	Dec. 13	Mar. 14
Long Day Care	13,830	13,680	13,990	13,690	13,190
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	2,360	2,330	2,390	2,360	2,330
Occasional Care	160	160	170	150	130
Outside School Hours Care	4,530	4,680	4,750	4,540	4,730
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>18,880</b>	<b>19,000</b>	<b>19,300</b>	<b>18,840</b>	<b>18,260</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families may use more than one service type in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

Around one third (6,620 or 36.3 per cent) of Indigenous families had children in approved child care located in Queensland; another third (6,470 or 35.4 per cent) had children in approved child care located in New South Wales.

**Table 12: Number of Indigenous families using child care by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2014**

Service type	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Australia <sup>1</sup>
Long Day Care	4,760	960	4,950	550	1,070	430	370	130	<b>13,190</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	1,010	190	650	80	120	240	20	20	<b>2,330</b>
Occasional Care	70	20	10	0	20	10	0	<10	<b>130</b>
Outside School Hours Care	1,330	400	1,730	350	330	250	280	70	<b>4,730</b>
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>6,470</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>6,620</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>1,390</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>18,260</b>

<sup>1</sup> As families may use more than one service type and use services in more than one state or territory in any particular quarter and due to rounding, the sum of the component parts may not equal the Total.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

## Availability

### Services

During the March quarter 2014, 16,207 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 4.9 per cent (753 services) since the March quarter 2013. There were 8,924 Outside School Hours Care services which accounted for 55.1 per cent of all services and 6,450 Long Day Care services which accounted for 39.8 per cent of all services.

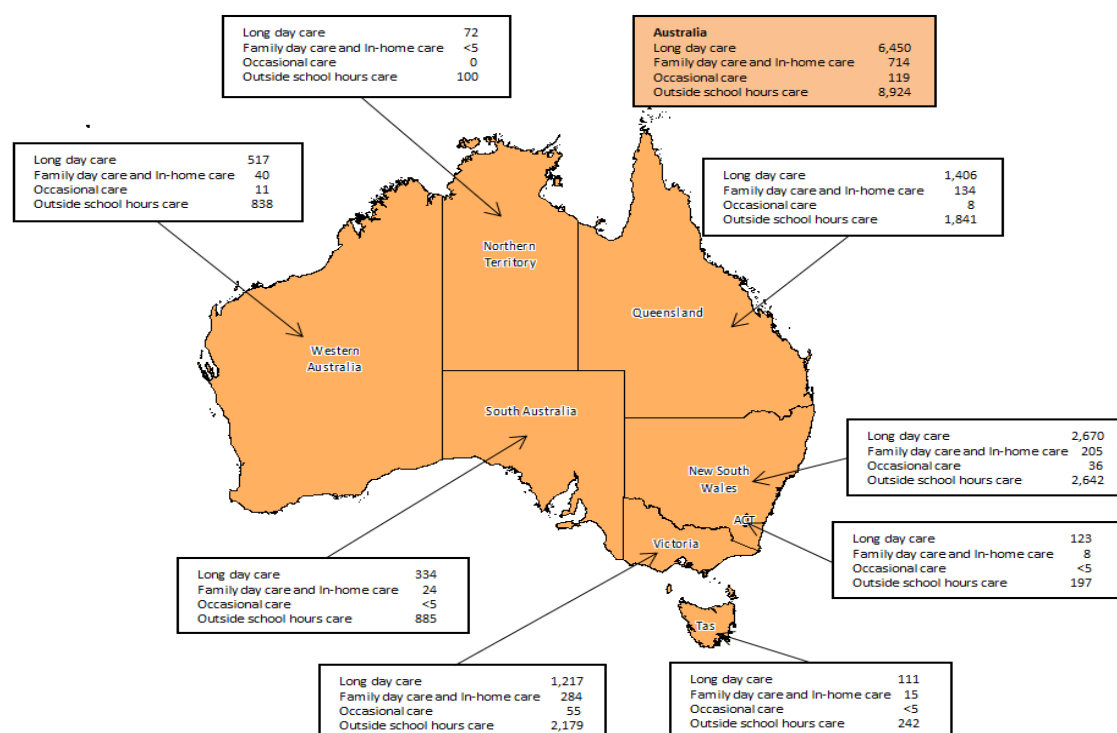
**Table 13: Number of child care services by service type, March quarter 2013 to March quarter 2014**

Service type	Mar. 13	Jun. 13	Sep. 13	Dec. 13	Mar. 14
Long Day Care	6,268	6,310	6,360	6,471	6,450
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	517	570	632	675	714
Occasional Care	118	119	119	119	119
Outside School Hours Care	8,551	8,718	8,796	8,773	8,924
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,454</b>	<b>15,717</b>	<b>15,907</b>	<b>16,038</b>	<b>16,207</b>

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

In the March quarter 2014, around one third of services were located in New South Wales (34.3 per cent), with 23.0 per cent in Victoria and 20.9 per cent in Queensland.

**Figure 4: Number of approved services by service type and state and territory, March quarter 2014**



Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

## Affordability

### Costs of care before Australian Government fee assistance

The average hourly child care fee for all service types in the March quarter 2014 was \$7.65, an increase of 5.8 per cent since the March quarter 2013. Fees varied across service types from a high of \$9.15 per hour for Occasional Care services to a low of \$6.15 per hour for Outside School Hours Care services.

**Table 14: Average hourly fee by service type, March quarter 2013 to March quarter 2014**

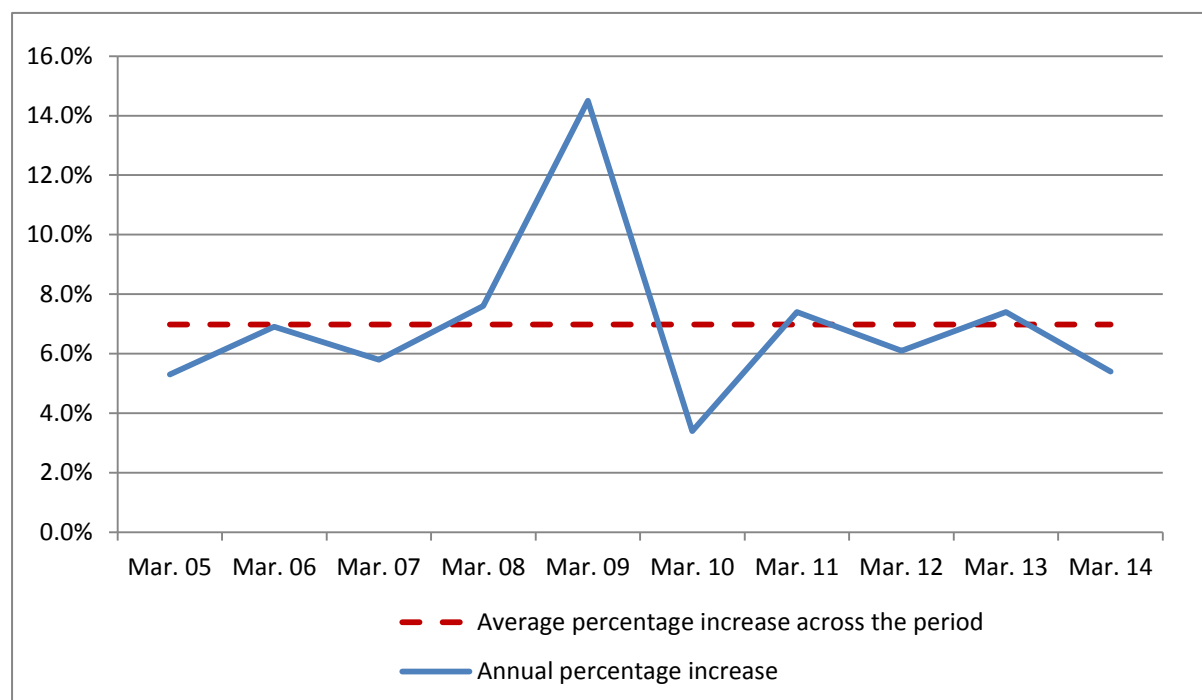
Service type	Mar. 13	Jun. 13	Sep. 13	Dec. 13	Mar. 14
Long Day Care	\$7.40	\$7.50	\$7.65	\$7.60	\$7.80
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$7.45	\$7.55	\$7.75	\$7.90	\$7.95
Occasional Care	\$8.75	\$8.85	\$9.05	\$9.05	\$9.15
Outside School Hours Care	\$5.85	\$6.05	\$6.10	\$6.15	\$6.15
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>\$7.25</b>	<b>\$7.35</b>	<b>\$7.50</b>	<b>\$7.55</b>	<b>\$7.65</b>

<sup>1</sup> Hourly fee for each service type is calculated by dividing the sum of all fee amounts by the sum of all hours for each service type.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

The average hourly fee for Long Day Care increased by 5.4 per cent from the March quarter 2013 to the March quarter 2014. This increase compares with the average annual percentage increase of 7.0 per cent for the period from the March quarter 2005 to the March quarter 2014.

**Figure 5: Average and annual percentage change to Long Day Care hourly fees, March quarter 2005 to March quarter 2014**



Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

The Australian Government subsidises the cost of child care for eligible families through the Child Care Benefit and the Child Care Rebate to help parents with the cost of approved child care. During the March quarter 2014, the total estimated expenditure on Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate was \$1,288.1 million. The majority (\$852.9 million or 66.2 per cent) of this was paid on behalf of families using Long Day Care services.

**Table 15: Total estimated Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate entitlements by service type, March quarter 2014**

Service type	Child Care Benefit ('000)	Child Care Rebate ('000)	Total ('000)
Long Day Care	\$368,484	\$484,362	<b>\$852,846</b>
Family Day Care and In-Home Care	\$237,474	\$80,720	<b>\$318,194</b>
Occasional Care	\$1,208	\$1,703	<b>\$2,911</b>
Outside School Hours Care	\$49,038	\$65,073	<b>\$114,111</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$656,203</b>	<b>\$631,858</b>	<b>\$1,288,062</b>

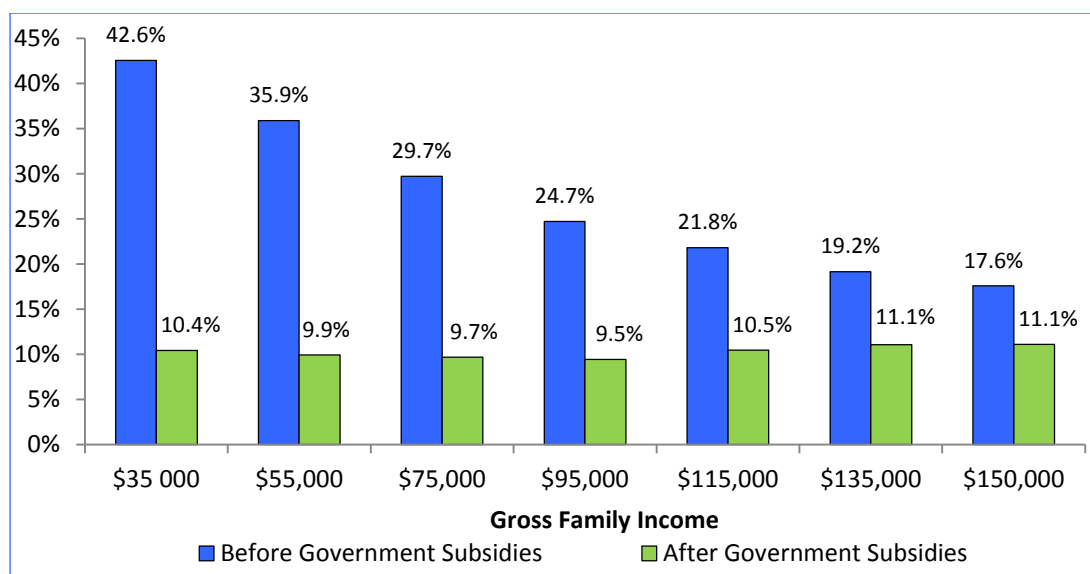
Source: Department of Social Services administrative data – based on estimated entitlements.

### Costs of care after Australian Government fee assistance

The child care out-of-pocket costs for families are determined by a combination of the fees services charge, the type of child care used, the amount of care used by families for their children and the amount of Australian Government subsidies that families are entitled to.

Before Australian Government child care subsidies were taken into account, out-of-pocket costs for families varied from 42.6 per cent of weekly disposable income for families earning a gross income of \$35,000 per year, to 17.6 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$150,000 per year. After Australian Government child care subsidies, out-of-pocket costs were significantly reduced to around 10.0 per cent of disposable income across all income ranges.

**Figure 6: Out-of-pocket costs<sup>1</sup> for one child in Long Day Care before and after Australian Government subsidies, March quarter 2014**



<sup>1</sup> Out-of-pocket costs (before and after Australian Government subsidies) are shown for families with one child using Long Day Care for 50 hours of care per week. Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

## Vacancies

Table 16 details the national trend in child care vacancies from the March quarter 2012 to the March quarter 2014 by service type.

It appears that vacancies in Long Day Care services peak in the March quarter of each year (nearly 69,000 in March quarter 2012, nearly 81,000 in March quarter 2013 and around 92,000 in March quarter 2014) and that the number of vacancies then declines throughout the year.

**Table 16: Child care vacancies by service type, March quarter 2012 to March quarter 2014<sup>1</sup>**

Service type	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Dec-12	Mar-13	Jun-13	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14
<b>Long Day Care</b>									
Total number of services	6,133	6,156	6,192	6,271	6,268	6,310	6,360	6,471	6,443
Per cent services reporting	77%	77%	84%	82%	83%	84%	91%	90%	93%
Proportion with vacancies	90%	87%	85%	86%	89%	89%	86%	86%	90%
Average vacancies	68,750	60,540	61,660	58,190	80,630	78,250	68,490	66,410	92,340
<b>Family Day Care</b>									
Total number of services	370	376	392	415	447	499	560	605	642
Per cent services reporting	66%	63%	65%	59%	54%	50%	47%	46%	40%
Proportion with vacancies	84%	84%	83%	80%	81%	83%	80%	85%	85%
Average vacancies	6,490	5,980	6,040	6,230	6,980	6,890	7,130	7,500	8,610
<b>Occasional Care</b>									
Total number of services	80	80	82	94	118	119	119	119	119
Per cent services reporting	65%	59%	62%	56%	51%	55%	63%	66%	61%
Proportion with vacancies	63%	60%	57%	53%	55%	61%	52%	53%	55%
Average vacancies	300	240	220	220	320	380	310	300	330
<b>Before and After School Hours Care</b>									
Total number of services	5,956	6,020	6,036	6,057	6,219	6,292	6,314	6,306	6,514
Per cent services reporting	63%	65%	66%	64%	63%	62%	66%	66%	65%
Proportion with vacancies	86%	85%	86%	87%	87%	87%	88%	89%	89%
Average vacancies	72,360	73,910	80,660	82,860	84,550	88,010	96,160	100,410	101,880
<b>Vacation Care</b>									
Total number of services	2,248	2,323	2,377	2,348	2,332	2,426	2,482	2,467	2,403
Per cent services reporting	53%	58%	64%	58%	57%	57%	60%	56%	60%
Proportion with vacancies	69%	67%	69%	69%	71%	69%	72%	71%	73%
Average vacancies	19,740	21,410	27,370	21,480	23,860	22,650	29,480	26,200	29,130

<sup>1</sup> Data relating to the small number of reporting services with all places not meeting the relevant vacancies definition have not been included in this report.

Source: Department of Social Services administrative data.

## Technical Notes

### General counting rules

Use of child care services is counted for each individual child using approved child care services. An instance of child care usage is defined as at least one child care attendance per child care service for the quarter irrespective of duration or frequency. For example, a single hour at an Occasional Care centre or 40 hours per week throughout the quarter at a Long Day Care centre, are both counted as an instance of child care usage.

Children and families are recorded for each of the service types that they use during the quarter. Children and families using more than one service type during the quarter or financial year are counted only once within each applicable service type category and only once within the 'Total' category for the relevant time period. Note that as children and families may use more than one service type in any particular timeframe the sum of the component parts may not equal the 'Total' category.

Changes in service type numbers need to be understood in the context of counting rules. Prior to the implementation of the Child Care Management System (CCMS) all services with an 'active' status were included regardless of attendance. This resulted in a small number of services being included in the data that did not actually have any children in attendance. Under CCMS a service is counted as 'active' only if it had at least one child attending at some time during the quarter, thus aligning the counting rules for children, families and services.

### Data sources

Data included in this report comes from the following sources:

- The majority of data is extracted from the Child Care Data and Reporting System (CCDARS). CCDARS is a Department of Social Services based data storage system for data collected from approved child care services via the Child Care Management System.
- Supplementary data is sourced from the MyChild website and the Department of Human Services.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data is included in this report for comparison purposes.

**Revisions:** Due to changes in the administrative system, data may be revised to ensure the most accurate, up-to-date figures are published.

### Vacancy information

All approved services are required to regularly report their anticipated vacancies according to a standard definition, to the Department of Social Services. For most services, a vacancy is defined as a permanent full day vacancy that the service is willing to fill.

The information contained in this report (Table 16) relates to specific reference weeks. As is standard practice, a reference week is used to represent the quarter and reduce errors due to potential inconsistencies in reporting. For the March quarter 2014, vacancies for Long Day Care, Before and After School Hours Care, Occasional Care and Family Day Care are reported for the week 17 March to 23 March 2014 and for Vacation Care for the week 20 January to 26 January 2014.

## Definitions

**Approved care:** Care provided by Long Day Care, Family Day Care and In-Home Care, Outside School Hours Care and Occasional Care services approved by the Australian Government to receive Child Care Benefit on behalf of families.

**Average number of vacancies:** As services report vacancies for each day of the week, the number of vacancies for each service is averaged out across the weekdays, that is, it is the sum of vacancies on each weekday divided by five. The total number of vacancies in an area is the sum of the average vacancies per service.

**Child Care Benefit (CCB):** A payment made by the Australian Government to families to assist with the cost of child care.

**Child Care Management System (CCMS):** This is the electronic system used for the administration of CCB. Under CCMS, approved child care services submit attendance information to the Department of Social Services over the internet. Data in this report are primarily sourced from the CCMS.

**Child Care Rebate (CCR):** A payment made by the Australian Government to assist eligible working families with the out-of-pocket cost of child care. CCR is calculated based on the gap between the fees charged by the child care service and the CCB paid in respect of fee relief. Families who satisfy the work/training/study test requirements may be entitled to receive CCR for 50 per cent of all out-of-pocket costs up to an annual limit.

**Family Day Care:** Family Day Care educators provide flexible care and developmental activities in their own homes for other people's children on behalf of an approved Family Day Care service.

**In-Home Care:** In-Home Care educators provide flexible care and developmental activities in the child's own home on behalf of an approved In-Home Care service.

**Long Day Care:** This is a centre-based form of child care service. Long Day Care services provide quality all day or part-time care for children of working families and the general community.

**Occasional Care:** This is a care type mainly for non-school aged children. These services cater mainly for the needs of families who require short-term care for their children.

**Outside School Hours Care:** Services provide care for school aged children before and/or after school during the school term. Some services also provide care on 'pupil free' days. Vacation Care is also included in this category. Vacation Care services provide care for school children during the school holidays. Vacancies are reported separately for Before and/or After School Hours Care and Vacation Care.

**Reference week:** For Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Before and/or After School Hours Care and Occasional Care services, the reference week for vacancy information is selected as one of the last available weeks that is not affected by school or other holiday periods and a week that provided a consistent (with other weeks in the quarter) level of services that had reported across the quarter. The reference week includes weekdays only as most services do not operate on weekends. The reference week for Vacation Care is based on each state and territory's school holiday periods.

**Region:** Regions of Australia are classified according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS), July 2011. This classification divides each state and territory into several regions on the basis of their relative access to services.

**Reporting services:** The services that reported their vacancy information for the reference week. This includes a small number of services that reported vacancy information and indicated they were not operational for the week.

**Service:** Child care services are approved by the Australian Government to receive CCB on behalf of families. Most Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Before and After School Hours Care, Vacation Care services and some In-Home Care and Occasional Care services are approved child care services. The total number of services refers to the number of services that were active during the March quarter 2014, that is, they had at least one record of child care attendance in the quarter.

**Vacancy:** Anticipated availability that child care services are willing to fill for each week they are operational. This is an ongoing full day vacancy for Long Day Care and Family Day Care, full day vacancy for Vacation Care and Occasional Care services and an ongoing full session vacancy for Before and/or After School Hours Care.

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Cataloguing title: Child Care and Early Learning in Summary, March quarter 2014. ISBN: 978-1-925007-72-5

Comments and suggestions regarding this publication are welcomed and should be forwarded to the Department of Social Services.

Published by the Department of Social Services

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