



# COVID-19 in Western Australia

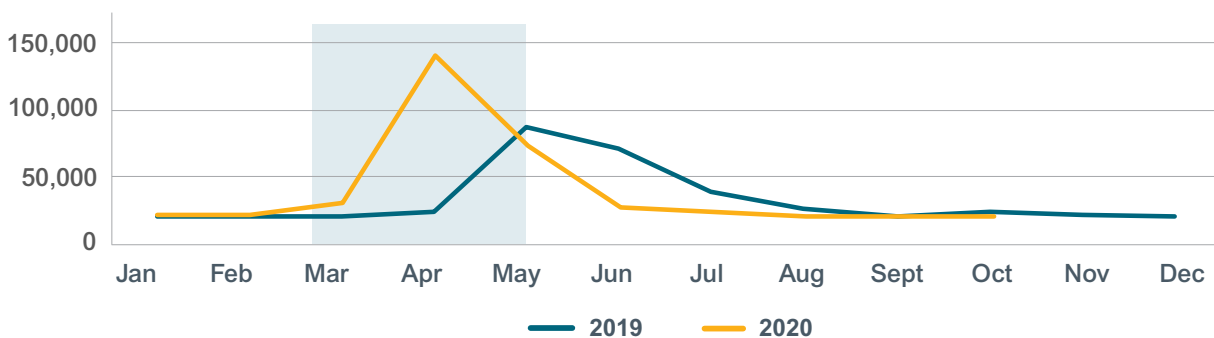
## Bulletin 5: The impact on seeking routine care

Information on Medicare services and GP presentations indicate patterns of routine healthcare seeking behaviour changed during March-April-May 2020 (the COVID-19 period).

Medicare items associated with a range of routine care services showed a **decrease** during the COVID-19 period compared to the same time in the previous year, including: **health assessments, chronic disease management plans and medication reviews.**

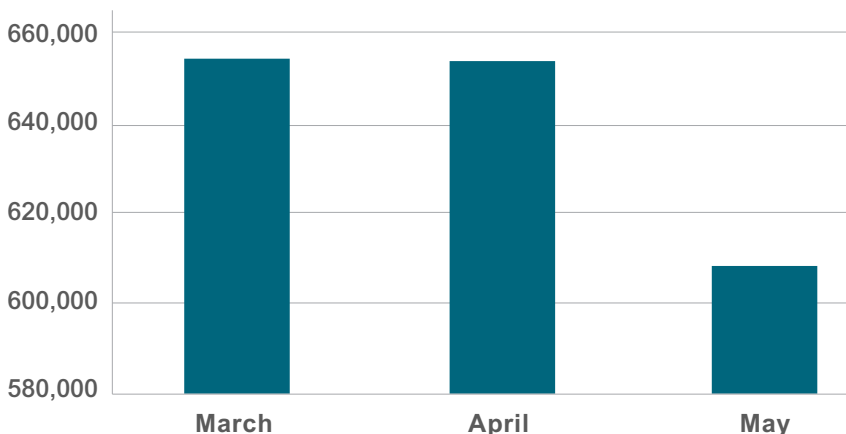
In contrast, the Medicare item for 'attendance for an obvious problem' (MBS item number: 3) was substantially **increased** in April compared to the previous year. The 'obvious problem' item includes flu vaccinations and repeat prescriptions for chronic conditions.

### 'Attendance for an obvious problem' (MBS item number: 3)



In addition, the number of people visiting a GP was consistent in March and April and declined in May.

### Patients attending GP practices by month, 2020



Taken together, these results suggest people continued to consult their GP for flu injections and repeat prescriptions during the COVID-19 period, when many other areas of routine health service declined from 2019 levels.