



Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary

September quarter 2017

This publication provides information on children in approved child care services across Australia for the September quarter 2017.

Key findings for the September quarter 2017 include:

- 1,312,650 children attended approved child care, up 1.9 per cent compared with the September quarter 2016.
- 901,640 families had at least one child in approved child care, an increase of 3.2 per cent since the September quarter 2016.
- 18,520 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 1.8 per cent since the September quarter 2016.
- The total estimated Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate entitlement was \$1,907.5 million, down 0.7 per cent since the September quarter 2016.

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 September quarter 2017, 901,640 families used approved child care services for their 1,312,650 children.

- In terms of affordability, 93.0 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 September quarter 2017, there were 18,520 services providing approved child care services across Australia.

Table 1: Child care children, families, services and estimated entitlements by state and territory, September quarter 2017

| State and territory | Number of children using approved child care ¹ | Number of families using approved child care ¹ | Number of approved child care services | Estimated Child Care Benefit (CCB) entitlement ¹ ('000) | Estimated Child Care Rebate (CCR) entitlement ¹ ('000) | Estimated number of families receiving CCR ¹ |
|---------------------|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| NSW | 439,500 | 305,300 | 6,402 | \$275,309 | \$393,786 | 281,630 |
| Vic. | 327,340 | 221,690 | 4,268 | \$240,962 | \$277,867 | 206,250 |
| Qld | 296,480 | 201,710 | 3,718 | \$196,814 | \$215,901 | 187,330 |
| SA | 86,260 | 58,750 | 1,367 | \$40,036 | \$52,489 | 55,270 |
| WA | 102,170 | 72,360 | 1,772 | \$50,067 | \$81,368 | 67,830 |
| Tas. | 22,980 | 16,050 | 395 | \$11,228 | \$13,391 | 14,910 |
| NT | 10,250 | 7,260 | 207 | \$4,142 | \$10,629 | 7,010 |
| ACT | 30,260 | 20,790 | 391 | \$8,165 | \$35,328 | 20,320 |
| Australia | 1,312,650 | 901,640 | 18,520 | \$826,724 | \$ 1,080,758 | 838,440 |

¹ 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 Education and Training administrative data.

Child Care Usage

Children

During the September quarter 2017, 1,312,650 children used approved child care in Australia, up by 1.9 per cent since the September quarter 2016. When considering children aged 0-12 years, 32.2 per cent of all children in that age bracket attended some form of approved child care in the September quarter 2017.

During the September quarter 2017, children attended various services providing approved child care, including Long Day Care (721,090 or 54.9 per cent), Outside School Hours Care (445,140 or 33.9 per cent), Family Day Care and In-Home Care (182,830 or 13.9 per cent), and Occasional Care (6,140 or 0.5 per cent).

Table 2: Number of children using child care by service type, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

| Service type | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Long Day Care | 694,500 | 706,570 | 699,510 | 682,060 | 721,090 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 211,700 | 205,920 | 206,520 | 183,750 | 182,830 |
| Occasional Care | 6,530 | 6,530 | 5,660 | 5,850 | 6,140 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 417,650 | 401,380 | 433,480 | 436,260 | 445,140 |
| Total¹ | 1,288,480 | 1,280,770 | 1,281,260 | 1,268,140 | 1,312,650 |
| <i>Per cent of Australian population²</i> | <i>31.9%</i> | <i>31.4%</i> | <i>31.4%</i> | <i>31.5%</i> | <i>32.2%</i> |

1 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.

2 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 Education and Training administrative data, ABS Cat. No. 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics, Sep. 2017.

New South Wales (33.5 per cent) had the largest share of children attending approved child care during the quarter, followed by Victoria (24.9 per cent) and Queensland (22.6 per cent).

Table 3: Number of children using child care by service type and state and territory, September quarter 2017

| Service type | NSW | Vic. | Qld | SA | WA | Tas. | NT | ACT | Australia ¹ |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Long Day Care | 243,800 | 169,890 | 172,430 | 42,960 | 58,960 | 12,170 | 5,860 | 16,580 | 721,090 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 66,800 | 62,720 | 28,530 | 6,340 | 12,350 | 4,120 | 440 | 1,690 | 182,830 |
| Occasional Care | 2,130 | 2,330 | 420 | 100 | 910 | 120 | 0 | 150 | 6,140 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 139,540 | 102,130 | 103,420 | 39,570 | 35,820 | 8,050 | 4,180 | 12,830 | 445,140 |
| Total¹ | 439,500 | 327,340 | 296,480 | 86,260 | 102,170 | 22,980 | 10,250 | 30,260 | 1,312,650 |

1 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 Education and Training administrative data.

Most children who used approved child care used services located in major cities (1,028,920 children or 78.4 per cent), whereas around one in five (290,600 or 22.1 per cent) children used services located in regional and remote areas.

Table 4: Number of children using child care by service type and region, September quarter 2017

| Service type | Major cities of Australia | Regional ¹ and Remote Australia ² | Total ³ |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Long Day Care | 545,160 | 178,130 | 721,090 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 145,010 | 38,740 | 182,830 |
| Occasional Care | 3,590 | 2,550 | 6,140 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 364,510 | 81,710 | 445,140 |
| Total³ | 1,028,920 | 290,600 | 1,312,650 |

1 Includes Inner and Outer Regional

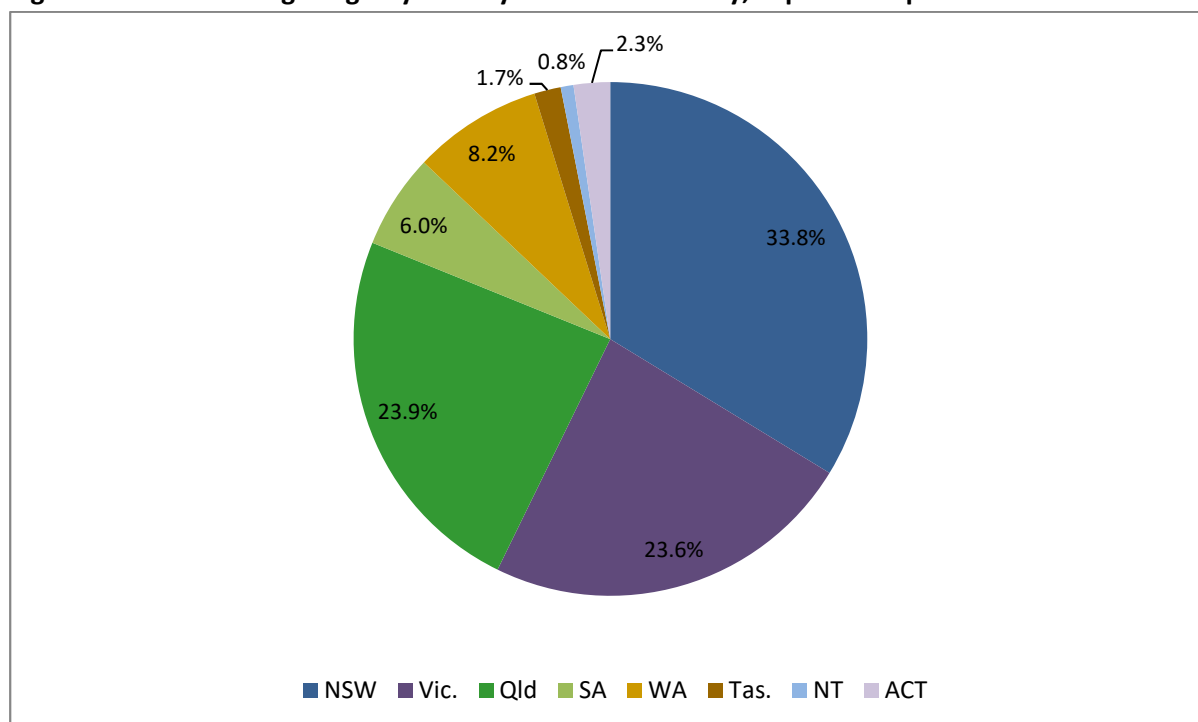
2 Includes Remote and Very Remote

3 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 Education and Training administrative data.

New South Wales (33.8 per cent) had the largest share of children using long day care during the quarter, followed by Queensland (23.9 per cent) and Victoria (23.6 per cent).

Figure 1: Children using Long Day Care by state and territory, September quarter 2017



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

During the September quarter 2017, for all types of child care, the average time that a child spent in approved child care was 24.8 hours per week. This compares with children who used Long Day Care who attended for an average of 28.9 hours per week.

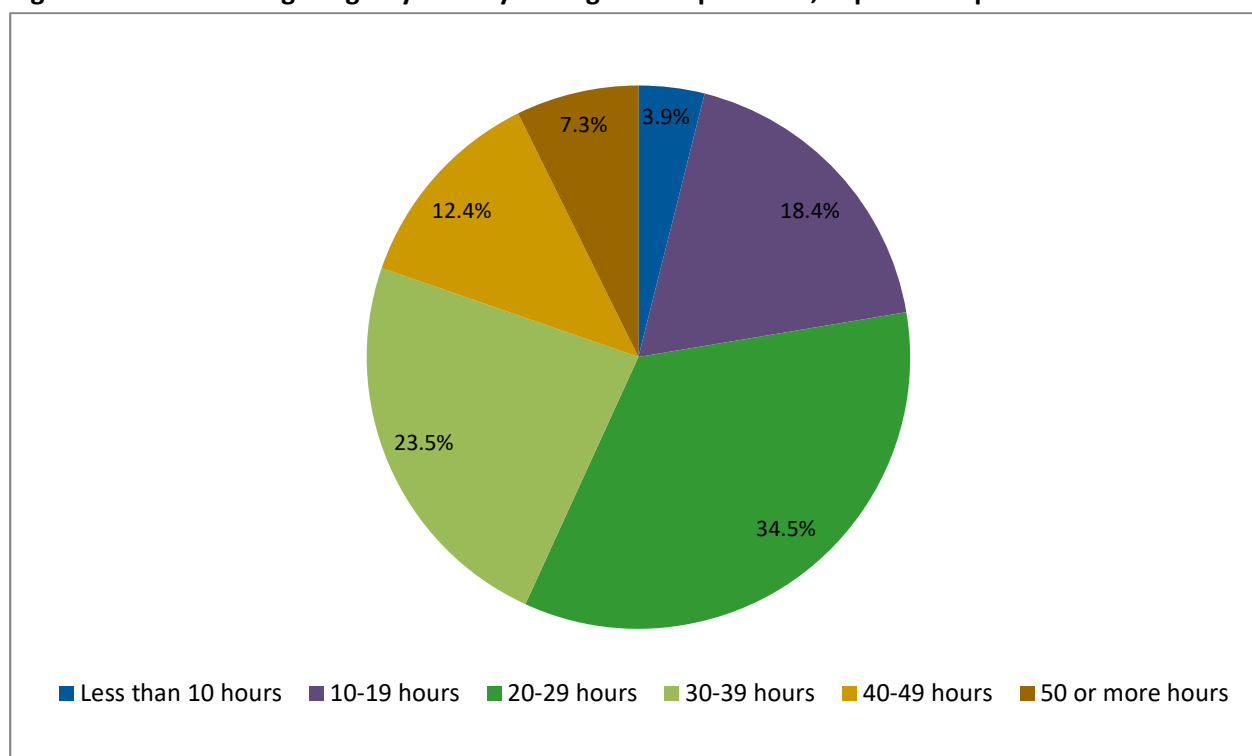
Table 5: Average weekly hours in child care by service type, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

| Service type | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Long Day Care | 28.7 | 28.5 | 28.6 | 28.4 | 28.9 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 31.3 | 30.5 | 30.9 | 29.5 | 28.9 |
| Occasional Care | 12.3 | 12.0 | 12.4 | 12.1 | 12.5 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 11.7 | 10.9 | 12.0 | 10.8 | 11.8 |
| Total | 25.3 | 24.9 | 25.0 | 24.1 | 24.8 |

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

34.5 per cent of children using Long Day Care used an average of 20-29 hours per week in the September quarter 2017.

Figure 2: Children using Long Day Care by average hours per week, September quarter 2017



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Families

During the September quarter 2017, there were 901,640 families using some form of approved child care for their children, an increase of 3.2 per cent since the September quarter 2016. The number of families using Family Day Care and In-Home Care has decreased by 6.8 per cent since the September quarter 2016.

Table 6: Number of families using child care by service type, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

| Service type | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Long Day Care | 565,900 | 573,280 | 564,880 | 560,260 | 586,830 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 120,680 | 117,740 | 117,650 | 112,310 | 112,520 |
| Occasional Care | 5,440 | 5,420 | 4,770 | 4,940 | 5,120 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 296,970 | 286,430 | 305,380 | 310,090 | 317,270 |
| Total¹ | 873,790 | 871,150 | 869,750 | 874,020 | 901,640 |

¹ 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 Education and Training administrative data.

In the September quarter 2017, 305,300 families (33.9 per cent) had children attending approved child care in New South Wales, followed by 221,690 families (24.6 per cent) in Victoria and 201,710 families (22.4 per cent) in Queensland.

Across Australia, nearly two-thirds (586,830 or 65.1 per cent) of families using approved child care chose Long Day Care and around one-third chose Outside School Hours Care (317,270 or 35.2 per cent).

Table 7: Number of families using child care by service type and state and territory, September quarter 2017

| Service type | NSW | Vic. | Qld | SA | WA | Tas. | NT | ACT | Australia ¹ |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Long Day Care | 201,330 | 139,540 | 135,220 | 35,480 | 48,200 | 9,920 | 4,930 | 13,540 | 586,830 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 42,800 | 34,550 | 18,670 | 4,220 | 7,980 | 2,920 | 330 | 1,160 | 112,520 |
| Occasional Care | 1,780 | 1,950 | 340 | 80 | 770 | 100 | 0 | 130 | 5,120 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 100,400 | 73,750 | 72,870 | 27,520 | 25,100 | 5,690 | 3,050 | 9,190 | 317,270 |
| Total¹ | 305,300 | 221,690 | 201,710 | 58,750 | 72,360 | 16,050 | 7,260 | 20,790 | 901,640 |

¹ 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 Education and Training administrative data.

Indigenous children and families

During the September quarter 2017, 34,440 Indigenous children (2.6 per cent of all children) used approved child care in Australia. The number of Indigenous children using approved child care has increased by 7.4 per cent since the September quarter 2016.

Table 8: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

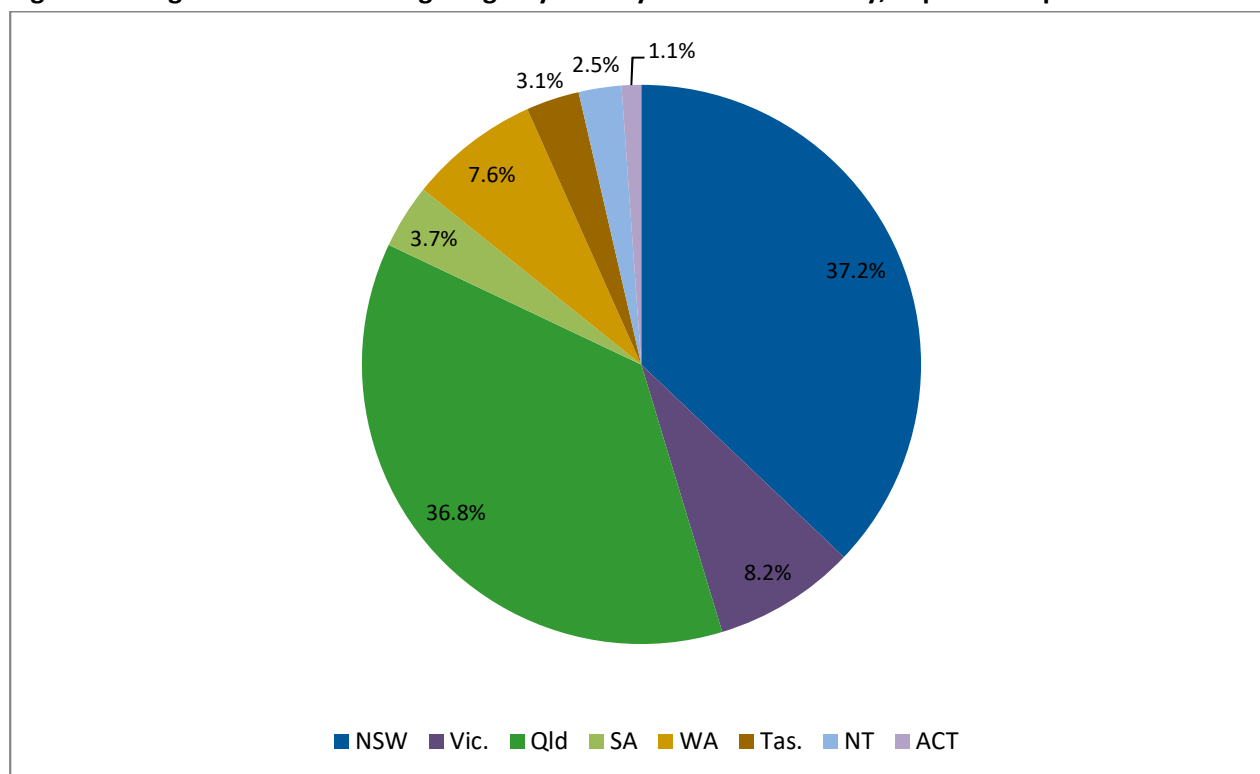
| Service type | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Long Day Care | 20,280 | 20,620 | 20,790 | 20,610 | 22,150 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 4,660 | 4,580 | 4,640 | 4,160 | 4,180 |
| Occasional Care | 240 | 240 | 210 | 210 | 220 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 7,920 | 7,700 | 8,430 | 8,480 | 8,970 |
| Total¹ | 32,080 | 32,120 | 32,670 | 32,500 | 34,440 |

¹ 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 Education and Training administrative data.

The largest proportion of Indigenous children attending Long Day Care was in New South Wales with 37.2 per cent, followed by Queensland with 36.8 per cent.

Figure 3: Indigenous children using Long Day Care by state and territory, September quarter 2017



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

At the national level, 15.4 per cent of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years attended approved child care. Compared with all children aged 0–12 years, a smaller proportion of Indigenous children aged 0–12 years attended approved child care, both nationally and in each state and territory.

Table 9: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type and state and territory, September quarter 2017

| Service type | NSW | Vic. | Qld | SA | WA | Tas. | NT | ACT | Australia ¹ |
|--|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Long Day Care | 8,240 | 1,830 | 8,150 | 830 | 1,680 | 690 | 550 | 250 | 22,150 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 1,920 | 480 | 1,080 | 130 | 210 | 310 | 30 | 30 | 4,180 |
| Occasional Care | 120 | 40 | 20 | <10 | 30 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 220 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 2,930 | 840 | 2,970 | 600 | 680 | 360 | 420 | 190 | 8,970 |
| Total Indigenous children using approved child care¹ | 12,820 | 3,100 | 11,910 | 1,510 | 2,490 | 1,280 | 980 | 460 | 34,440 |
| <i>Per cent of Indigenous population²</i> | <i>18.3%</i> | <i>19.0%</i> | <i>17.5%</i> | <i>12.4%</i> | <i>8.9%</i> | <i>15.6%</i> | <i>5.0%</i> | <i>24.2%</i> | <i>15.4%</i> |

1 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.

2 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 Education and Training administrative data and ABS Cat. No. 3238.0 Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 2001 to 2026 (30 April 2014).

Almost half of all Indigenous children who attended child care did so in regional or remote Australia (16,870 children or 49.0 per cent).

Table 10: Number of Indigenous children using child care by service type and region, September quarter 2017

| Service type | Major cities of Australia | Regional ¹ and Remote Australia ² | Total ³ |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Long Day Care | 10,840 | 11,440 | 22,150 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 2,170 | 2,030 | 4,180 |
| Occasional Care | 90 | 130 | 220 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 5,200 | 3,790 | 8,970 |
| Total³ | 17,830 | 16,870 | 34,440 |

1 Includes Inner and Outer Regional

2 Includes Remote and Very Remote

3 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 Education and Training administrative data.

During the September quarter 2017, 23,780 Indigenous families used approved child care, an increase of 7.8 per cent since the September quarter 2016.

Table 11: Number of Indigenous families using child care by service type, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

| Service type | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Long Day Care | 15,820 | 16,010 | 16,050 | 16,220 | 17,230 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 2,820 | 2,740 | 2,780 | 2,650 | 2,660 |
| Occasional Care | 190 | 190 | 170 | 180 | 180 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 5,380 | 5,260 | 5,690 | 5,800 | 6,120 |
| Total¹ | 22,050 | 22,040 | 22,260 | 22,610 | 23,780 |

¹ 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 Education and Training administrative data.

More than one third (9,040 or 38.0 per cent) of Indigenous families had children in approved child care located in New South Wales and another third (8,040 or 33.8 per cent) had children in approved child care located in Queensland.

Table 12: Number of Indigenous families using child care by service type and state and territory, September quarter 2017

| Service type | NSW | Vic. | Qld | SA | WA | Tas. | NT | ACT | Australia ¹ |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------|
| Long Day Care | 6,580 | 1,440 | 6,090 | 660 | 1,280 | 550 | 450 | 220 | 17,230 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 1,260 | 250 | 660 | 80 | 140 | 220 | 20 | 30 | 2,660 |
| Occasional Care | 100 | 30 | 10 | <10 | 20 | 10 | 0 | <10 | 180 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 2,030 | 580 | 2,000 | 400 | 450 | 240 | 300 | 140 | 6,120 |
| Total¹ | 9,040 | 2,100 | 8,040 | 1,040 | 1,720 | 900 | 690 | 330 | 23,780 |

¹ 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 Education and Training administrative data.

Availability

Services

During the September quarter 2017, 18,520 approved child care services operated in Australia, an increase of 1.8 per cent (333 services) since the September quarter 2016. There were 10,385 Outside School Hours services which accounted for 56.1 per cent of all services and 7,256 Long Day Care services which accounted for 39.2 per cent of all services.

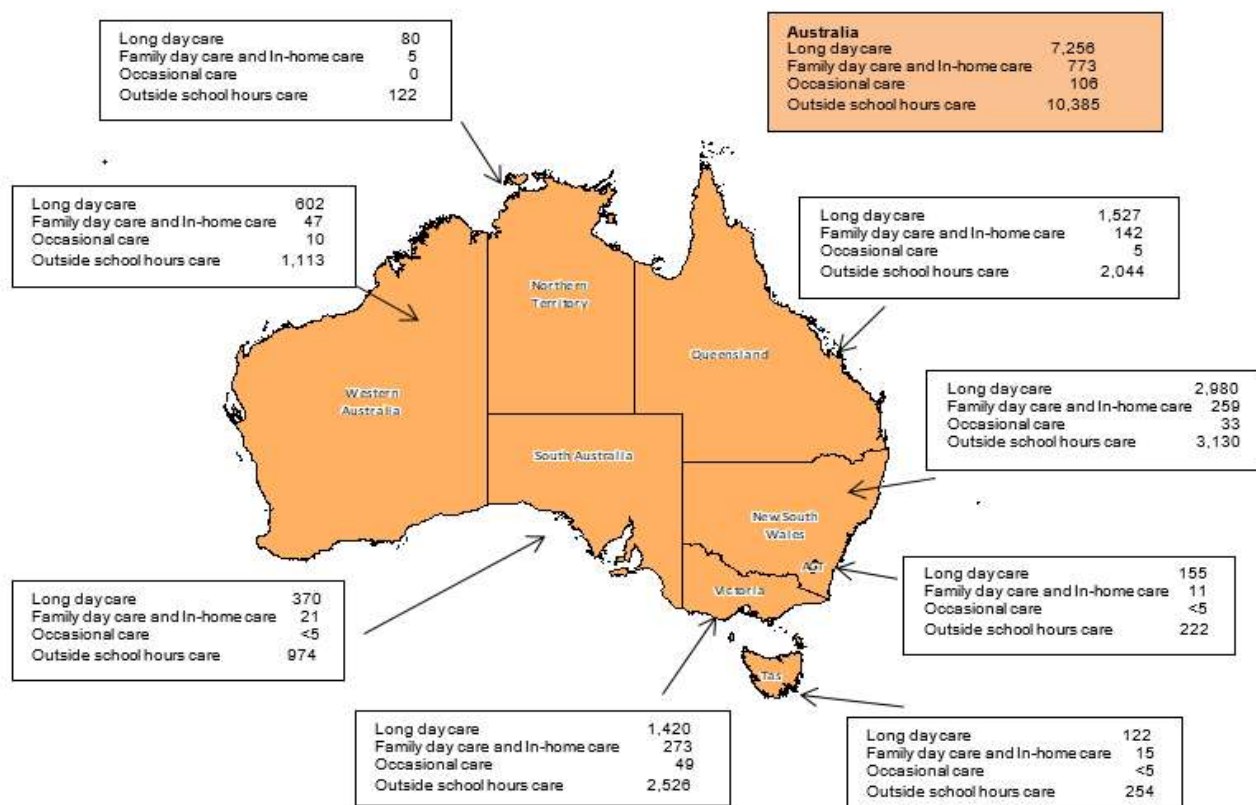
Table 13: Number of child care services by service type, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

| Service type | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Long Day Care | 7,027 | 7,051 | 7,145 | 7,184 | 7,256 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | 914 | 881 | 858 | 818 | 773 |
| Occasional Care | 110 | 110 | 106 | 106 | 106 |
| Outside School Hours Care | 10,136 | 9,873 | 10,209 | 10,353 | 10,385 |
| Total | 18,187 | 17,915 | 18,318 | 18,461 | 18,520 |

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

In the September quarter 2017, around one third of services (34.6 per cent) were located in New South Wales, with 23.0 per cent in Victoria and 20.1 per cent in Queensland.

Figure 4: Number of approved services by service type and state and territory, September quarter 2017



Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Affordability

Costs of care before Australian Government fee assistance

The average hourly child care fee for all service types in the September quarter 2017 was \$9.00, an increase of 3.0 per cent since the September quarter 2016. Fees varied across service types from a high of \$10.45 per hour for Occasional Care services to a low of \$7.05 per hour for Outside School Hours Care services.

Table 14: Average hourly fee by service type, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

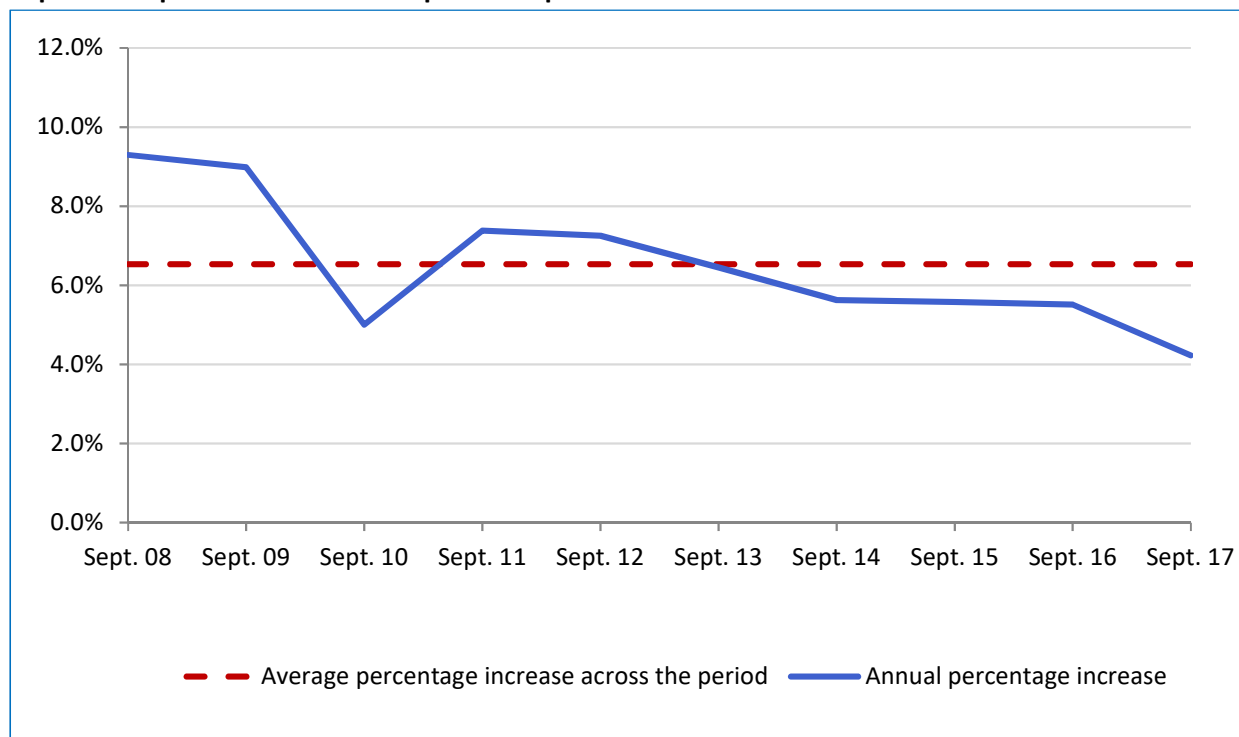
| Service type | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Long Day Care | \$9.00 | \$8.95 | \$9.15 | \$9.20 | \$9.35 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | \$8.90 | \$8.95 | \$8.95 | \$8.80 | \$8.80 |
| Occasional Care | \$10.05 | \$10.05 | \$10.25 | \$10.25 | \$10.45 |
| Outside School Hours Care | \$6.95 | \$7.00 | \$7.05 | \$7.20 | \$7.05 |
| Total¹ | \$8.75 | \$8.75 | \$8.85 | \$8.90 | \$9.00 |

¹ 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 Education and Training administrative data.

The average hourly fee for Long Day Care increased by 4.2 per cent from the September quarter 2016 to the September quarter 2017. This increase compares with the average annual percentage increase of 6.5 per cent for the period from the September quarter 2008 to the September quarter 2017.

Figure 5: Average and annual percentage change to Long Day Care hourly fees, September quarter 2008 to the September quarter 2017



Source: Department of Education and Training 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 September quarter 2017, the total estimated expenditure on Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate was \$1,907.5 million. The majority (\$1,367.4 million or 71.7 per cent) of this was paid in relation to families using Long Day Care services.

Table 15: Total estimated Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate entitlements by service type, September quarter 2017

| Service type | Child Care Benefit ('000) | Child Care Rebate ('000) | Total ('000) |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Long Day Care | \$509,312 | \$858,080 | \$1,367,392 |
| Family Day Care and In-Home Care | \$253,891 | \$102,592 | \$356,483 |
| Occasional Care | \$1,514 | \$2,395 | \$3,909 |
| Outside School Hours Care | \$62,007 | \$117,691 | \$179,698 |
| Total | \$826,724 | \$1,080,758 | \$1,907,482 |

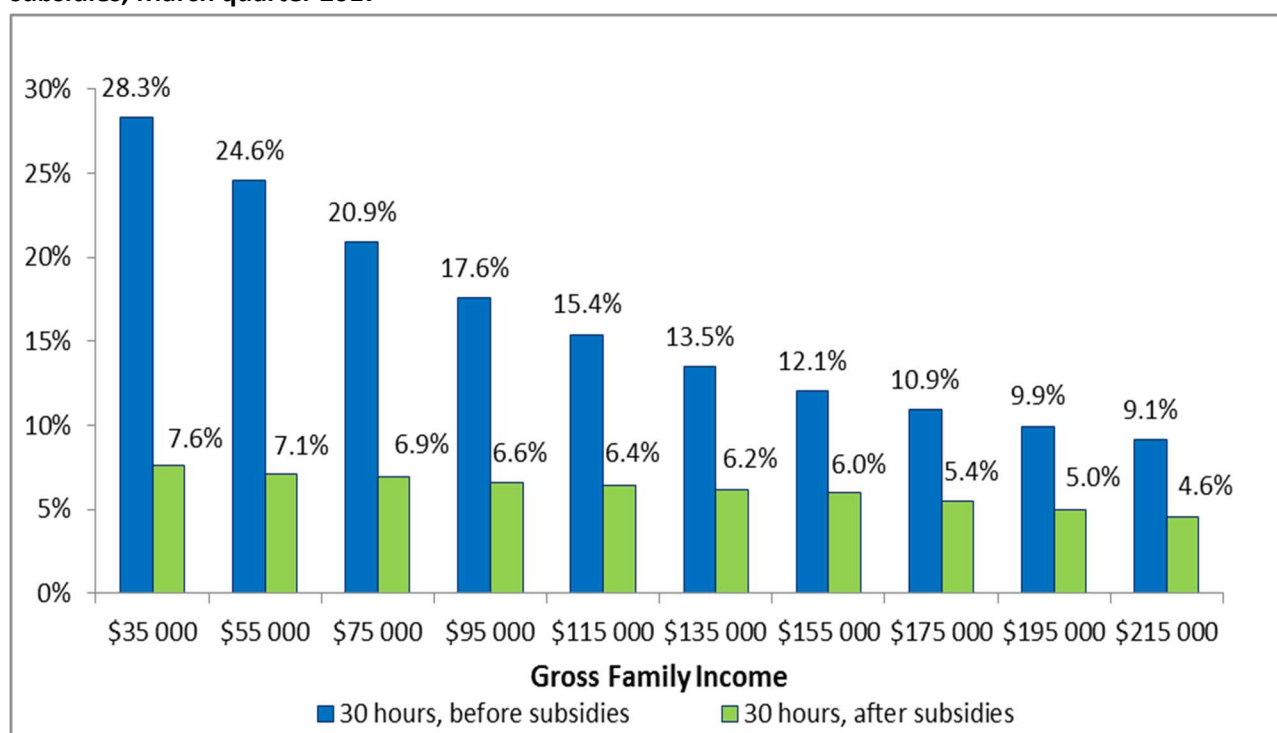
Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data – based on estimated entitlements.

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 28.3 per cent of weekly disposable income for families earning a gross income of \$35,000 per year to 9.1 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$215,000 per year. After Australian Government child care subsidies, out-of-pocket costs were significantly reduced, varying from 7.6 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$35,000 per year to 4.6 per cent for families earning a gross income of \$215,000 per year.

Figure 6: Out-of-pocket costs¹ for one child in Long Day Care before and after Australian Government subsidies, March quarter 2017



¹ Out-of-pocket costs (before and after Australian Government subsidies) are shown for families with one child aged less than 5 years old using Long Day care for 30 hours of care per week. This takes into account the CCR cap (of \$7,500).

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Additional Assistance

JET Child Care Fee Assistance

In the September quarter 2017, 7,430 families were assisted with Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance (JETCCFA). This represented 0.8 per cent of the total number of families who used approved child care services.

Table 16: JET Child Care Fee Assistance usage, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

| | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of children assisted | 12,470 | 11,530 | 10,610 | 10,560 | 10,760 |
| Number of families using JETCCFA | 8,600 | 7,880 | 7,350 | 7,360 | 7,430 |
| Average hours per week per child | 26.6 | 26.4 | 26.6 | 26.4 | 26.8 |
| Estimated JETCCFA entitlement (\$'000) | \$9,313 | \$7,729 | \$6,436 | \$8,373 | \$8,688 |

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Special Child Care Benefit

In the September quarter 2017, 11,490 families were assisted with Special Child Care Benefit. This represented 1.3 per cent of the total number of families who used approved child care services.

Table 17: Special Child Care Benefit usage, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

| | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Number of children assisted | 16,520 | 15,630 | 14,730 | 15,390 | 17,030 |
| Number of families using SCCB | 10,870 | 10,270 | 9,780 | 10,480 | 11,490 |
| Average hours per week per child | 34.2 | 34.2 | 34.4 | 34.0 | 34.7 |
| Estimated SCCB entitlement (\$'000) | \$55,771 | \$45,269 | \$42,407 | \$45,850 | \$58,287 |

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Grandparent Child Care Benefit

In the September quarter 2017, 4,490 families were assisted with Grandparent Child Care Benefit. This represented 0.5 per cent of the total number of families who used approved child care services.

Table 18: Grandparent Child Care Benefit usage, September quarter 2016 to September quarter 2017

| | Sep. 16 | Dec. 16 | Mar. 17 | Jun. 17 | Sep. 17 |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Number of children assisted | 8,220 | 8,560 | 8,800 | 8,010 | 8,080 |
| Number of families using GCCB | 4,470 | 4,540 | 4,590 | 4,400 | 4,490 |
| Average hours per week per child | 37.7 | 36.8 | 37.8 | 36.2 | 36.3 |
| Estimated GCCB entitlement (\$'000) | \$53,492 | \$55,409 | \$55,220 | \$33,256 | \$30,894 |

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Vacancies

Table 19 details the national trend in child care vacancies from the September quarter 2015 to the September quarter 2017 by service type.

Table 19: Child care vacancies by service type, September quarter 2015 to September quarter 2017

| Service type | Sep. 15 | Dec. 15 | Mar. 16 | Jun. 16 | Sep-16 | Dec-16 | Mar-17 | Jun-17 | Sep-17 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Long Day Care | | | | | | | | | |
| Total number of services | 6,755 | 6,804 | 6,862 | 6,932 | 7,027 | 7,051 | 7,145 | 7,184 | 7,256 |
| Per cent services reporting | 91% | 91% | 92% | 92% | 92% | 91% | 90% | 92% | 89% |
| Proportion with vacancies | 89% | 88% | 91% | 91% | 89% | 89% | 93% | 92% | 92% |
| Average vacancies | 86,700 | 77,440 | 110,510 | 106,650 | 91,980 | 87,610 | 122,570 | 113,560 | 103,000 |
| Family Day Care | | | | | | | | | |
| Total number of services | 786 | 792 | 794 | 823 | 849 | 819 | 794 | 757 | 712 |
| Per cent services reporting | 32% | 32% | 30% | 44% | 42% | 40% | 37% | 36% | 36% |
| Proportion with vacancies | 87% | 90% | 89% | 87% | 90% | 91% | 92% | 94% | 94% |
| Average vacancies | 8,410 | 7,520 | 7,180 | 9,270 | 11,640 | 9,990 | 8,940 | 9,030 | 8,370 |
| Occasional Care | | | | | | | | | |
| Total number of services | 115 | 115 | 111 | 110 | 110 | 110 | 106 | 106 | 106 |
| Per cent services reporting | 63% | 64% | 59% | 68% | 71% | 68% | 72% | 70% | 64% |
| Proportion with vacancies | 55% | 54% | 60% | 56% | 56% | 56% | 53% | 55% | 54% |
| Average vacancies | 390 | 420 | 510 | 460 | 470 | 430 | 600 | 470 | 410 |
| Before and After School Hours Care | | | | | | | | | |
| Total number of services | 7,348 | 6,981 | 7,177 | 7,331 | 7,324 | 7,306 | 7,502 | 7,583 | 7,554 |
| Per cent services reporting | 51% | 60% | 58% | 60% | 80% | 80% | 79% | 79% | 76% |
| Proportion with vacancies | 90% | 92% | 91% | 92% | 93% | 94% | 94% | 94% | 94% |
| Average vacancies | 100,080 | 119,040 | 105,750 | 117,550 | 187,600 | 194,800 | 188,400 | 197,390 | 195,210 |
| Vacation Care | | | | | | | | | |
| Total number of services | 2,732 | 2,139 | 2,648 | 2,734 | 2,812 | 2,907 | 2,707 | 2,770 | 2,831 |
| Per cent services reporting | 55% | 57% | 55% | 55% | 60% | 60% | 58% | 58% | 57% |
| Proportion with vacancies | 73% | 64% | 75% | 70% | 75% | 68% | 77% | 67% | 73% |
| Average vacancies | 34,000 | 34,100 | 33,410 | 30,510 | 42,920 | 43,930 | 39,360 | 31,670 | 40,330 |

Source: Department of Education and Training administrative data.

Technical Notes

General counting rules

All analysis broken down by state in this report corresponds to the *state of the service* rather than the state where the child/family lives.

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.

CCB and CCR estimation

The Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) estimation method used in this report:

- Under-estimates CCB as only CCB payments made during the quarter are reported and not the CCB amounts customers were actually entitled to but did not receive (for example because of families over-estimating income or receiving annual or lump sum CCB payments to avoid debts).
- Over-estimates CCR due to under-estimation of CCB.
- Doesn't take into account reconciliation which will adjust the customers' CCB and CCR actual entitlements based on their actual rather than estimated incomes. There is a considerable time lag for the reconciliation process to be complete, this can take a number of years.

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 Education and Training 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 Education and Training. 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 19) 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 September quarter 2017, vacancies for Long Day Care, Before and After School Hours Care, Occasional Care and Family Day Care are reported from 24 July to 30 July 2017. Vacancies for Vacation Care are reported from 10 July to 16 July 2017 for all States and Territories other than QLD. The Vacation Care reference week for QLD is 3 July to 9 July 2017 due to differences in timing of school holidays.

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 Education and Training 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.

Grandparent Child Care Benefit (GCCB): Grandparents with the primary care of grandchildren and who receive an income support payment may be eligible for the Grandparent Child Care Benefit (GCCB). The GCCB covers the full cost of approved child care for up to 50 hours for each child per week. In certain circumstances Grandparents may be able to get GCCB for more than 50 hours per week.

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.

Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance (JETCCFA): This is a form of government assistance that provides extra help with the cost of approved child care for eligible parents undertaking activities such as job search, work, study, or rehabilitation as part of an Employment Pathway Plan with the Department of Human Services or an employment service provider, to help them to enter or re-enter the workforce.

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 December quarter 2015, that is, they had at least one record of child care attendance in the quarter.

Special Child Care Benefit (SCCB): Additional child care assistance provided for children considered to be at risk of serious abuse or neglect, or exceptional cases where a family's income does not truly reflect their capacity to pay the usual charged fee. Special Child Care Benefit is reported as 'child at risk' and 'financial hardship'.

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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