

Australian Medical Association Limited

ABN 37 008 426 793

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604
 Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499
 Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



**AMA PARTNERS WITH UNICEF TO ASSIST INDIA IN COVID-19
 CRISIS**

AMA members are also supporting their medical colleagues in India

The AMA has partnered with children’s charity, UNICEF, in an appeal for funds for desperately-needed health care during India’s COVID-19 crisis.

AMA members support the appeal and are also supporting their sister organisation, the Indian Medical Association (IMA), which has been at the forefront of managing India’s COVID-19 response.

The appeal follows talks between the AMA and the IMA and high-level diplomatic discussions over the worsening situation in India.

AMA has consulted with Australia’s High Commissioner in India, Barry O’Farrell and on Friday, AMA President Dr Omar Khorshid met with India’s Deputy High Commissioner to Australia, P.S. Karthigeyan.

“We’ve watched in dismay as India struggles to get on top of this deadly second wave of COVID-19, but efforts have been dogged by acute shortages of crucial drugs, oxygen and hospital beds,” Dr Khorshid said.

“In addition to the shocking daily death rate in India, I was struck by news from our IMA colleagues that more than 1,000 Indian doctors have died throughout the pandemic, including families with two doctor parents both of whom died from COVID-19, whose children are now orphans.

“I’m struck by how awfully sad this news is, more so with the passing last night of a former IMA President from COVID-19.

“Australia has the capacity to help, and I’m pleased UNICEF has established an appeal that allows tax deductible donations for Australians willing to support delivery of health care on the ground in India.

“I’ve also promised the IMA we will seek more Australian Government support for India through vaccine supply, provision of medical equipment, and repatriation of vulnerable Australians in India to relieve just a bit of extra pressure from their local health system.

“The AMA has also asked the Australian Government for more support for other countries in need, and particularly our near neighbours in Papua New Guinea. Australia has a special bond with the people of PNG, and a duty to do more.

“We’ve heard about some of the vital work the IMA is doing through its pan-Indian network. They’ve established special COVID clinics, set up helplines for patients to manage hospital admissions and arranged and administered medicines and oxygen where possible.

“We’re encouraging our own AMA members to support the IMA’s special COVID-19 fund which we know will translate into health care on the ground where it’s needed.

“I’d also encourage all Australians who want to help India’s people directly with healthcare in this crisis to make tax deductible donations to UNICEF and other charities which have established appeals to support countries in need.”

For more information and to donate visit <https://india.unicef.org.au/ama>

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CONTACT:

AMA Media 0427 209 753

media@ama.com.au

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