

**Australian Medical Association Limited**

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**Health Minister and opposition counterpart to face a ‘question time’ at AMA conference**

The AMA’s National Conference begins in Sydney this Friday with highlights including a ‘question time’ session with Health Minister Mark Butler and his opposition counterpart Anne Ruston to take questions from conference attendees.

The conference is a COVID-safe event with masks provided to attendees each day. Attendees are strongly encouraged to wear masks during the event. National Conference is a ‘hybrid’ event allowing speakers and attendees to participate remotely as well as in-person.

With Australia’s health care system still under enormous strain from the COVID-19 pandemic the opening plenary session, led by AMA President Dr Omar Khorshid, will look at how the medical profession’s governing and regulatory bodies have dealt with the pressure resulting from the pandemic.

Other sessions will examine the Australian response — looking at the good, the bad and the ugly of public health decision making with Chief Medical Officer Paul Kelly, a key decision maker through the pandemic, joined by experts with competing views and business leaders.

International speakers include the Chief Medical Advisor to the President of the USA and Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Dr Anthony Fauci, and President of the World Medical Association Dr Heidi Stensmyren speaking on the international response to COVID-19.

Conference sessions this year include ‘*Indigenous Voice to Parliament: What it means for health*’. Director of From the Heart, Dean Parkin will speak to the conference about why doctors should support the Voice as part of improving Indigenous health outcomes.

Other sessions will cover the future of general practice, rural and remote medicine, private health, climate change, and the crisis in the public hospital system.

Numerous awards are presented each year at the conference including the President’s Award, Doctor in Training of the year Award and Women in Leadership Award.

On Saturday, the AMA will be joined by the Australian Council on Smoking and Health to present this year’s ‘Dirty Ashtray Award’.

It’s also the last weekend on the job for AMA President Dr Omar Khorshid and Vice President Dr Chris Moy with AMA delegates electing a new President and Vice President in a delegate only session on Sunday with the results announced to media that afternoon.

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