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Strengthening Medicare Taskforce welcome

Thursday July 28 2022

The Australian Medical Association today welcomed the federal government’s announcement on the establishment of a Strengthening Medicare Taskforce, which will decide priority areas for primary care funding.

AMA President, Dr Omar Khorshid said the taskforce will provide recommendations on what high priority investments are required to support implementation of Australia’s Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan 2022–2032.

“Following AMA advocacy during the election campaign the then opposition committed to providing almost \$1 billion in funding to address issues in primary care — a commitment that was sorely needed,” Dr Khorshid said.

“We pushed hard for the commitment to fund the ten-year primary care plan through the [AMA’s plan to Modernise Medicare](#) campaign and applaud the decision to provide the funding. We are also happy to be part of the conversation with representation on the taskforce.”

The Modernise Medicare campaign — run during the election — outlined the direct benefit to patients of investing in general practice to introduce a medical home, and under it, a range of specific and targeted programs.

“The government’s funding is a strong down payment in the primary care system,” Dr Khorshid said.

“It will mean investment in programs that improve patient access to GPs after hours and to allied health professionals at their usual practice such as nurses and mental health professionals through the Workforce Incentive Program.

“For many patients who currently see multiple healthcare professionals, across multiple appointments, and in multiple locations, this policy could save them a lot of coordination, time, and money.”

Dr Khorshid said the way health care is delivered in primary care is changing and funding arrangements need to be modernised to reflect this.

“A well-funded and resourced general practice sector is key to improving health outcomes, creating significant savings through better care, greater efficiency, and reducing the burden on other parts of the health system, including our public hospitals which are under significant pressure.”

[Read more about the taskforce and membership](#)

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