



AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (SA) INC

Level 1, 175 Fullarton Road, Dulwich 5065
www.amasa.org.au Phone: (08) 8361 0100

URGENT FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN SA PUBLIC HOSPITALS NEEDED FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE HEALTH DEMANDS

12 February 2022

The Australian Medical Association in South Australia (AMA(SA)) is amplifying AMA calls for a huge increase in public hospital funding as a major element of its Federal election platform.

The Federal AMA this morning released its 2022 public hospitals campaign, 'Clear the hospital logjam', asking that Australians strongly consider how their local candidates and parties propose to fund public hospitals when voting in the Federal election.

It is the first time the AMA has elevated public hospital funding to a federal election campaign issue. The campaign explains how ramping, emergency waiting times and delays in elective surgery are due to ongoing underfunding that is placing immense pressure on hospitals staggering under the additional burden of COVID-19.

AMA(SA) President Dr Michelle Atchison says the crisis in South Australian public hospitals, and especially the Royal Adelaide Hospital, demonstrates the need for more investment from the Commonwealth Government.

'Public hospital funding becomes a state or a federal problem depending on who wants to play the "blame game".' Dr Atchison said. 'At this time, the Commonwealth funds 45 per cent and the State 55 per cent. 'The AMA calls on the Commonwealth to increase its funding to 50 per cent, with the state then spending the extra funds on staff and services to improve hospital performance and capacity.'

On Tuesday, Dr Atchison told the Legislative Review Committee examining the state of South Australia's ambulance operations and services that drastic changes are needed in Commonwealth-state hospital funding models, so people are properly cared for in the state's hospitals, aged care facilities and the community.

'Ramping is what happens when the system falls down,' Dr Atchison says. 'When ramping does occur, it's because there are major, important weaknesses in the way hospitals are designed, funded and resourced.'

'An overhaul of patient flow processes is absolutely vital to improve transition of patient care in and out of hospitals. This requires investment – in facilities, in programs, in beds, but most importantly in people – so our system works, so our hospitals work.'

Dr Atchison said the AMA and its members are not experts in managing hospital budgets. 'But we are experts in patient care, and how inefficiencies and bad management affect how we can care for our patients, and the working environment for everyone involved in providing that care,' she said.

'It's been very clear for some time that our major hospitals – including our almost new RAH – are not operating as they should be.'

Senior Policy, Media and Communications Advisor Karen Phillips - 0402 103 451

MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE



AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (SA) INC

Level 1, 175 Fullarton Road, Dulwich 5065
www.amasa.org.au Phone: (08) 8361 0100

'The Commonwealth is also responsible for aged care and the residents who have been left bereft of care, support and dignity throughout this pandemic, and who make up many of the people forced into our hospitals when they should be appropriately cared for in the places they have called home for months or years.

'The Commonwealth funds NDIS packages. Accessing the services they need through these packages mean some patients wait months in an acute hospital, occupying beds that are needed by and should be available for South Australians requiring hospital care.'

AMA(SA) President Dr Michelle Atchison is available for interviews at AMA(SA) offices at 175 Fullarton Road, Dulwich, at 11 am today.

Senior Policy, Media and Communications Advisor Karen Phillips - 0402 103 451

MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE