

26 February 2024

Mr Michael Walsh
Director-General
Queensland Health

By email: [REDACTED]

Dear Director-General

Subject: Queensland Health Satellite Hospitals promotional materials

General practitioners (GPs) have raised concerns about Queensland Health materials promoting the government's Satellite Hospitals (example attached). Doctors are particularly concerned that the documents incorrectly represent the services provided by GPs and general practices and are likely to cause confusion and poorer health outcomes for patients.

For example, in the attached screen shot the 3 health services (Satellite Hospital, Emergency Department, General Practitioner) are represented in separate boxes. This implies each health service is wholly different from the other and the health conditions listed are not available at the other services.

This is a very siloed approach and inconsistent with current Queensland Health policy frameworks seeking to promote integrated and holistic care. It is also highly likely to result in fragmented care, with patients being diverted away from general practice for conditions or services their GP is, in fact, most qualified to treat or provide including:

- 'non-life-threatening illnesses and injuries'
- 'minor infections'
- chronic conditions
- ongoing, continuous care
- the vast majority of prescription medicines, as opposed to just 'routine prescriptions'.

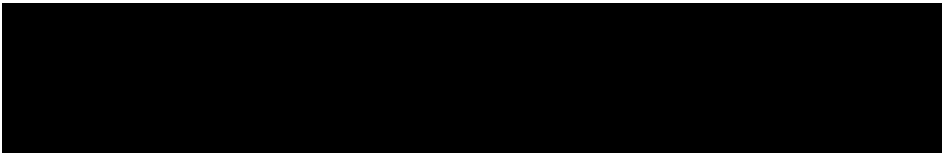
We also note that the GP in the graphic is represented without a stethoscope, a common medical instrument associated with doctors, whilst the graphics for the Satellite Hospital and Emergency Department practitioners include stethoscopes. This could imply the GP is not as qualified as other doctors or, in fact, a doctor.

AMA Queensland understands that the Government's intended purpose of Satellite Hospitals is to reduce emergency department (ED) presentations for minor conditions without diverting patients who would have otherwise visited their regular GP. The Minister has also consistently assured general practices that patients will not suffer through reduced continuity of care.

It is our view that promotion of materials such as these will only serve to confuse patients and divert those who would have seen their GP to EDs or Satellite Hospitals. In turn, this will result in reduced health outcomes and no additional capacity to manage the correctly diverted patients from hospital EDs.

We would welcome an opportunity to discuss these issues further with you and/or an appropriate Queensland Health delegate.

Yours sincerely



Dr Maria Boulton
President
AMA Queensland

Dr Brett Dale
Chief Executive Officer
AMA Queensland



Queensland Health



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Choose your facility



Satellite Hospital

Non-life-threatening illnesses and injuries
Minor infections
Simple fractures



Emergency Department

Sudden and severe pain particularly in the abdomen, chest or head.
Facial drooping and slurred speech
Major accidents including loss of limbs
Increased respiratory effort or distress



General Practitioner

Routine prescriptions
Skin checks
Second opinions
Chronic wound dressing

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