

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 20 February 2024

Statement on the closure of the Veterans' MATES program

A new program that supports better health outcomes for veterans needs to be developed and implemented in the wake of the federal government's decision to close the Veterans' MATES program.

AMA President and former Australian Navy officer Professor Steve Robson said the AMA understood the decision to end the program given concerns about data privacy.

"A replacement program should be developed that takes into account concerns that have been raised about the privacy of sensitive healthcare information," Professor Robson said.

The Veterans' MATES program was designed to support the quality use of medicines for veterans, providing educational materials to health professionals and veterans, and individualised medicine advice to general practitioners.

"The AMA is proud to have been involved with the program since its inception, as it helped improve health outcomes in the veterans' community," Professor Robson said.

"This program helped keep many veterans out of hospital and improved their overall quality of life.

"While we are saddened this program has ended, it is important we now work with the federal government and other key stakeholders to develop an effective replacement."

Professor Robson said the Department of Veterans' Affairs must continue to invest in programs that support better health outcomes for our veterans' communities.

"This goes beyond funding timely access to high quality care and extends to innovative programs like Veterans' MATES that aim to provide clinicians and patients with best practice information."

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