

MEDIA RELEASE

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Better pay and conditions needed to secure future of general practice

The Australian Medical Association today released its [pre-budget submission for general practice](#), with costed solutions aimed at encouraging more doctors to enter general practice training and pursue a long-term career as a GP.

AMA President Professor Steve Robson said the AMA's pre-budget submission, released ahead of [a meeting of medical leaders in Canberra today](#), comes at a time when timely access to general practice is becoming a problem for more and more patients.

"General practice is the cornerstone of health care delivery in Australia yet it's under significant pressure as patients present with increasingly complex health conditions," Professor Robson said.

"GPs are the highest-trained general healthcare professional, and patients really value the care they provide. But we have not been training enough GPs for several years, with the Australian General Practice Training Program consistently failing to meet intake targets.

"If Australia is to continue to deliver high class general practice care and excellent patient outcomes, we need to improve access to general practice by encouraging more doctors to become general practitioners."

Professor Robson said many medical trainees are looking outside of a career in general practice, especially as public hospitals offer much better pay and conditions in comparison to general practice.

"A trainee entering general practice training will generally take an immediate pay cut and face the prospect of inferior conditions in relation to sick leave, carers leave, study leave, annual leave, long service leave and parental leave," Professor Robson said.

"It's understandable that trainees will see the disparity in pay and conditions and not choose general practice."

The AMA is calling on the government to ensure GP trainees are offered equitable employment conditions in comparison to their hospital counterparts.

"Equal pay and equal conditions will not only recognise the importance of general practice in our health system, but also encourage more doctors to enter GP training," Professor Robson said.

"We are seeing this approach trialled at small scale in a number of places, but this is not enough to turn current workforce shortages around. If we are going to be serious about the future of general practice, we need to make general practice a more attractive career for all medical trainees.

"The upcoming budget is an opportunity for the federal government to commit to funding equitable conditions for all GP trainees. While there will be an upfront cost, patient access to care will be significantly improved over time and we know that this will help keep patients healthier and out of hospital and save health dollars in the long term."

[Read the AMA's pre-budget submissions](#)

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