

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 30 October 2024

AMA urges immediate resolution in Healthscope, insurers disputes

The Australian Medical Association is urging Healthscope, Bupa and the Australian Health Service Alliance (AHSA) to immediately return to the negotiating table to resolve each of their damaging funding disputes.

AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen said patients are at risk of being the collateral damage in each of the funding disputes between the private hospital operator and the private health funds.

"Patients are completely innocent bystanders in this unacceptable squabble, as they now face higher out-of-pocket costs imposed by Healthscope from 26 November," Dr McMullen said.

"Doctors are also caught in the middle of these kinds of disputes, as they receive limited information about the proposed new fees and are inevitably forced into situations where patients ask for advice on whether they should switch funds.

"Our focus as a profession is on providing the best possible clinical care, not becoming de-facto financial advisors for our patients."

Dr McMullen said these latest disputes between Healthscope and each of Bupa and the AHSA only reinforced the need for a Private Health System Authority.

"Policy holders are sick of private hospital groups and insurers constantly at loggerheads," she said.

"It undermines the confidence Australians have in private health insurance arrangements and almost always leads to higher out-of-pocket charges at a time people are facing significant cost-of-living pressures.

"The AMA once again calls for the establishment of a Private Health System Authority, which can drive long-term reform and ensure the sector is appropriately regulated and patients get real value for money from their private health insurance.

"Such an authority can also have a crucial role in helping solve disputes like these between Healthscope and each of Bupa and the AHSA."

Until an independent authority can be established, the AMA urges all parties to reach an agreement for the sake of patients.

"It is time to strike a deal that puts the needs of patients first, while also delivering a reasonable return for all parties and recognising the rising costs of providing quality care," Dr McMullen said.

Contact: AMA Media: +61 427 209 753 media@ama.com.au



[@ama_media](#)



[@amapresident](#)



[@medicalassociation_au](#)



[AustralianMedicalAssociation](#)



[@medicalassociation_au](#)