

MEDIA RELEASE

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Budget delivers big for health, now it's time to act

AMA Queensland welcomes the record health investment in yesterday's state budget.

President Dr Nick Yim said the \$33.1 billion expenditure shows the government recognises the urgent need to invest in our health system.

"It is a relief to see that health remains a high priority," Dr Yim said.

"Patients are waiting far too long for life-saving healthcare and this funding is essential to turn that around.

"The government must now show how it will be spent and when.

"It must result in more services and patients treated this year – we simply cannot afford any more delays.

"We commend initiatives to improve patient flow and use private hospitals to reduce elective surgery backlogs, which AMA Queensland called for in its *Surgical Wait List Roundtable Action Plan*.

"But these must be implemented sensibly and alongside long-term plans that result in permanent increases in the capacity of our public hospitals.

"The budget also promises 46,000 additional health workers by 2032 – a much-needed start to addressing our critical workforce shortage – but we need a clear plan detailing how this target will be met.

"The government must release its data-driven workforce plan to show how it will attract and retain the doctors and nurses in the places and specialities where they are needed.

"AMA Queensland's Workforce Working Group's recommendations will be released shortly, and we urge Queensland Health to implement them to build the health workforce needed for the future.

"While we wish it was not needed, we welcome the funding for additional security guards and ambassadors in our public emergency departments and hospital wards.

"Occupational violence is increasingly common, and our doctors and nurses deserve protection at work.

The government's promise to restore maternity services in Biloela and Cooktown is commendable but will need to be supported through appropriate workforce incentives to attract the doctors needed for a safe delivery service.

"We reiterate our calls for Queensland Health to consult broadly with the medical profession about the proposal.

"We look forward to examining the budget papers closely in the coming days and working with the government to address our health system challenges."