



South Australia's public hospital doctors need support to keep health system afloat

Media Release – 12 September

The President of the Australian Medical Association of South Australia (AMA SA), Associate Professor Peter Subramaniam, is calling for increased career support for public hospital doctors to keep South Australia's healthcare system afloat.

He is urging the South Australian Government to fund and implement recommendations that would establish structured training pathways, career development, cultural safety, and wellbeing for hospital registrars and career medical officers (CMOs).

'Hospital registrars and CMOs provide essential day-to-day care for patients – they're the backbone of our health system. But the workforce remains stretched beyond capacity,' A/Prof Subramaniam says.

'This is something all South Australians should care about. If doctors feel burnt out or don't receive the career support they deserve, there's a very real risk some will exit the workforce. When that happens, it's the health system – and ultimately patients – who are worse off.'

A/Prof Subramaniam says the South Australian Government must do everything in its control to support and grow the workforce, especially against the backdrop of the public hospital logjam.

Right now, more than 24,000 people are waiting for essential planned surgeries in South Australia – 6,084 of those procedures are overdue.

'The reality is that the system is failing to meet growing community demand,' A/Prof Subramaniam says.

'Without stronger career support for public hospital doctors, we risk losing the very workforce our health system depends on most, and the public hospital logjam will get worse.

'Junior doctors, in particular, need structured career pathways, access to training, and wellbeing support, along with confidence that their future in South Australia is valued. This is not just about today's pressure – it's about securing tomorrow's workforce.'

The AMA is calling on all governments to fund and implement the Hospital Registrar and Career Medical Officer (CMO) Framework, that was developed through the Medical Workforce Reform and Advisory Committee. The Framework was prepared two years ago with strong support from medical professionals but is yet to be adopted by state and territory governments across Australia.

A/Prof Subramaniam is also calling on the South Australian Government to map the medical workforce to effectively plan for the future.

MEDIA RELEASE

'Without a clear understanding of workforce gaps, we will continue to lurch from one crisis to the next,' A/Prof Subramaniam says.

'We need to map the South Australian workforce to ensure we have enough doctors working in the roles and locations where they're needed.

'Patients deserve a system with enough doctors to meet their needs, and doctors deserve a system that supports them to stay, grow, and thrive here in South Australia.'

For more information please contact Media Manager Ben Terry on 0478 847 604.

MEDIA RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE