



AMA SA calls for greater transparency on what's driving ramping

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The President of the Australian Medical Association in South Australia (AMA SA) is escalating his calls for greater transparency on ambulance ramping reporting, saying today's figures tell only part of the story.

SA Health data shows 4,770 hours were lost on the ramp during June 2026 – 5,364 fewer than during June 2025.

AMA SA President Associate Professor Peter Subramaniam has welcomed the improvement, which he says comes under rising demand in the winter months.

'The doctors, nurses, paramedics and support staff who delivered treatment deserve real credit,' he says. 'Improving performance while demand grows is the hardest task in health care.'

'But June's 4,770 ramped hours remain many times higher than South Australians experienced before ramping became the norm, and represents an increase of more than 20% in one month as winter arrived.

'The test is not whether we are better than last June – it is whether these gains hold through July and August.'

In response to the latest figures, A/Prof Subramaniam is repeating the AMA's calls for better data to explain who is on the ramp and why – their age, their conditions and whether they are arriving at our hospitals from home, aged-care facilities or other referral pathways.

'The monthly ambulance ramping figures are incomplete – they show us what's happening, but they don't show why,' A/Prof Subramaniam says.

'AMA SA has long been saying we need to treat the cause, not the queue. But before we can fix the problem, we need a clearer picture of what's driving it,' A/Prof Subramaniam says.

AMA SA has written to the Health Minister asking his government to develop a demand-driver dashboard, which would be updated monthly alongside other data on SA Health's website.

The dashboard would break down ambulance arrivals by cohort, showing, for example, whether they are mental health presentations, people living with chronic disease or aged-care residents.

'We're not talking about building a new system from scratch. Much of this information is already collected through existing hospital data systems used at every public hospital – now it just needs to be made publicly available.

'Having monthly data on this and other measures will help decision-makers identify pressure points across the system and direct limited resources where they will have the greatest impact.'

A/Prof Subramaniam says the June figures demonstrate the value of publishing the staffed-bed position with the ramping data.

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'The government's own data shows the risk: inpatient occupancy is up 4.8% – an extra 137 occupied beds every day – and 441 older South Australians are in hospital beds today, medically ready for discharge but waiting for an aged-care place. Occupancy rising faster than staffed capacity is precisely how winter unwinds a good June.

'We ask that the government publish the staffed-bed position alongside the ramping data each month, so South Australians can see whether capacity is keeping pace with occupancy.

'In addition, we ask that the State and Commonwealth governments urgently deliver a joint plan for the 441 patients awaiting aged care. These patients deserve the right care in the right place, and every bed released returns capacity to the emergency patients who need it.'

For interview requests please contact Karen Phillips on 0402 103 451.

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