

**Australian Medical Association Limited**  
**ABN 37 008 426 793**

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604  
 Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499  
 Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



## **NEW AMA PRESIDENT CALLS TO REVIVE ECONOMY**

The AMA today elected a new President, Dr Omar Khorshid, and Vice President, Dr Chris Moy.

The election, at the AMA’s National Conference, follows the conclusion of the two-year term of President Dr Tony Bartone and Vice President Dr Chris Zappala.

Dr Khorshid, an orthopaedic surgeon in Perth and a former AMA WA President, said governments should increase medical, health, and aged care expenditure to both combat COVID-19 and help the economy avoid prolonged recession.

“State and Federal Governments have rightly funded the response effort to COVID-19,” Dr Khorshid said.

“Yet the Victorian aged care crisis, that could so easily occur in any State, arises from years of underinvestment in nursing, general practice and specialist geriatric care in aged care services.

“The crisis in mental health, that will get worse the longer COVID-19 is with us, arises from decades of underinvestment.

“Nations that adopt austerity and neglect health spending during recessions have taken longer to return to economic growth, and their populations have been sicker.

“Yet where nations have increased health expenditure or directed stimulus funding to health care needs, their economies recover faster and populations have been healthier.

“Given my term as AMA President will see Australia living with COVID-19 and its induced economic downturn, I’m putting governments on notice it is time to spend, and not cut health.”

Dr Khorshid said his priorities for his term as AMA President are to:

- Reaffirm the AMA as a strong, independent voice for health, with a critical role to hold governments to account, particularly on their handling of COVID-19;
- Restart efforts to address financial sustainability of the Nation’s public and private health system, and to fully utilise and develop the quality and capacity of public and private care;
- Halt the slide towards funder directed managed care;
- Promote the value and cost effectiveness of high quality General Practice at the core of the health system and as a gateway to more expensive care;
- Foster better gender equity within the leadership of the medical profession
- Seek action from governments and the community on important public health issues, including climate change and climate health impacts.

---

1 August 2020

CONTACT: Maria Hawthorne 02 6270 5478 / 0427 209 753