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**STRONG INVESTMENT IN AGED CARE MUST CONTINUE - AMA**

The AMA welcomes the Government’s latest allocation of additional funding to the aged care sector to help with managing the devastating impact of COVID-19, which brings the total Government investment in the aged care sector to around \$850 million in response to the pandemic.

AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, said that staff - including nurses, personal care attendants, and those in charge of maintaining appropriate hygiene - should be supported and rewarded for turning up at work in one of the most difficult environments.

“This pandemic and the unfortunate developments in a few aged care facilities in Australia are an important reminder of the need for improved standards of clinical care in residential aged care in Australia,” Dr Bartone said.

“Having appropriate staffing levels, staff to resident ratios, and appropriately trained staff and nurses on site 24/7 helps to ensure preparedness of the sector for any event, including a pandemic.

“Maintaining contact with family and friends during a lockdown period is important for the overall health and wellbeing of older people.

“The AMA supports the Government policy of allowing two visitors per day per resident and calls for the new Code of Conduct for providers being developed to ensure that this is enabled.

“The AMA also wants higher testing rates of aged care residents and staff as a way of preventing outbreaks in residential aged care facilities.

“We support testing of asymptomatic staff and residents in the aged care homes if there has been a single positive case in the facilities.”

4 May 2020

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