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TWO YEARS IN A ROW – QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT TAKES OUT AMA AWARD

AMA Best Public Health Initiative from a State or Territory Government Award

**2019 AMA NATIONAL CONFERENCE - #amanatcon
Sofitel Brisbane, 24-26 May 2019**

The Queensland Government's ground-breaking introduction of the State's first health promotion agency, Health and Wellbeing Queensland, has won the prestigious 2019 AMA Best Public Health Initiative from a State or Territory Government.

AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, announced the award at the AMA National Conference in Brisbane today.

It is the second year in a row that the Queensland Government has taken out the Award, following last year's win for its *Resilience on the Run* program to support the mental health of doctors in training.

Nominated by AMA Queensland, the Health and Wellbeing Queensland initiative is a coordinated, whole-of-government public health plan to minimise illness, to protect and promote health, and to combat the State's biggest public health issues, starting with obesity.

"AMA Queensland has long been calling for such a body, as doctors at the front line of health care in Queensland are experiencing first-hand the impact of growing numbers of patients needing treatment for chronic diseases caused by obesity and lifestyle factors," Dr Bartone said.

"In 2017, in response to AMA Queensland's advocacy, the then Queensland Health Minister, Cameron Dick, announced that the Government would introduce legislation to establish the Healthy Futures Commission Queensland to tackle these challenges and support children, young people, and families to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

"Following the 2017 State election, and in its 2018 State Budget Submission, AMA Queensland called on the new Health Minister, Steven Miles, to deliver on the promise by re-introducing legislation to establish the Commission.

"Their hard work paid off in the 2018 State Budget, which delivered on the creation of the Commission, now to be called Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQ), and in February 2019, when Mr Miles introduced legislation into Parliament to establish HWQ.

"Queensland Health acknowledged AMA Queensland's contribution in the media statement announcing the establishment of the new agency – truly an example of how AMA members can influence health policy at the highest levels."

Judge Amanda Bresnan, executive officer at National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, said it was a strong, well-defined campaign.

"This demonstrated a defined strategy with a strong intended outcome, which worked with Government to develop and implement innovative legislation," Ms Bresnan said.

“AMA Queensland identified a significant problem - obesity - and identified a strategy which targeted various points in Government policy.

“It used a range of mechanisms, including media, Parliamentary processes and the State Budget. It had the goal of establishing the Healthy Futures Commission, which is a first in Australia, and had the support of government to achieve this.”

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