



**AMA Family  
Doctor Week 2018**

YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR:  
HERE FOR YOU



**\*\*UNDER EMBARGO 6AM AEST 26 JULY 2018\*\***

**GENERAL PRACTICE – CHANGING FOR THE BETTER**  
**AMA FAMILY DOCTOR WEEK, 22- 28 July 2018**

*Your Family Doctor: Here for you*

General practice – the cornerstone of Australia’s healthcare system – is undergoing remarkable change to better meet patient needs, AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, said today.

Marking AMA Family Doctor Week 2018, Dr Bartone said that technological advances and changing business practices are combining to improve the service to patients.

“Every day in Australia, there are about 406,000 visits to family doctors and, on average, Australians see a family doctor about six times a year,” Dr Bartone said.

“Most patients have a preferred family doctor, and about 93 per cent of Australians always go to the same general practice. As people get older, they are more likely to keep seeing the same doctor.

“Many general practices have become larger and more diverse in the services that they offer to patients.

“More than ever, family doctors are working with other health professionals to care for patients, and many practices employ a range of allied health professionals, including practice nurses, pharmacists, diabetes educators, Aboriginal health workers, and psychologists.

“Many general practices now have co-located pathology collection centres, and point-of-care testing services are increasingly available in the practice to provide timely test results for your GP.

“General practice is now highly computerised. This means that if your own family doctor is unavailable, another doctor in the practice can look after you, with immediate access to your clinical records.

“Many practices also offer point-of-care Medicare claiming, online appointment making, and recall and follow-up systems to ensure that patients do not fall through the cracks.

“You can also talk to your GP about creating an electronic My Health Record, to ensure that those in your health care team can make informed treatment decisions.

“But one thing that will never change is the trusted relationship between a family doctor and their patient, and the personal touch that is so important.”

Family Doctor Week recognises and celebrates the important role that family GPs play in the lives of their patients. It runs from 22-28 July 2018.

