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**MBS REVIEW PRIORITY MUST BE IMPROVING HEALTH, NOT THE BUDGET BOTTOM LINE**

*AMA Submission to the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review Taskforce*

The AMA has lodged its submission in response to the MBS Review Taskforce Consultation Paper with the Department of Health.

AMA President, Professor Brian Owler, said today that the AMA supports a systematic review of the MBS, which involves genuine consultation with all medical specialties.

“The AMA wants the review to produce a modern MBS that reflects high quality, contemporary medical practice,” Professor Owler said.

“The review should be a single comprehensive update of the MBS that removes or amends outdated items and adds new items to reflect current modern medical care.

“However, the process outlined by the Taskforce Consultation Paper will lead to a fragmented MBS because items will be removed and minor amendments will be made quickly, while any new items to reflect modern practice would languish in the slow-moving Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) pipeline without being added.

“This raises the perception that the review could be merely a savings exercise with no benefits to patients.

“The AMA recommends a fast review and rapid implementation of its findings, preferably with the full support of the medical profession.

“It is vitally important that the process is rigorous, and ensures that the initial set of findings is tested sufficiently with the relevant medical groups to rule out unintended consequences.

“In our submission, the AMA is proposing a process that would be more efficient and transparent, and which would be more likely to be support the clinical services that patients need.”

The AMA submission is at <https://ama.com.au/submission/ama-submission-medicare-benefits-schedule-review-taskforce-consultation-paper>

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