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DELIVERING BETTER CARE FOR PATIENTS NOW AND POST COVID

The AMA 10-Year Framework for Primary Care Reform

The AMA today released its vision for the future of primary health care and general practice in post-COVID Australia - *Delivering Better Care for Patients: The AMA 10-Year Framework for Primary Care Reform*.

“General practice is the cornerstone of successful primary health care, and the foundation of Australia’s world-class healthcare system,” AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, said today.

“However, despite agreeing with the rhetoric of the importance of properly funded general practice, successive Governments have overseen a rate of investment in general practice that has not matched the increase in the cost of providing high-quality patient care.

“Government spending on GP services is about \$391 per person annually, down from \$395 in 2017-2018.

“The Australian population is growing, ageing, and developing more complex health needs as chronic disease and mental ill-health continue to increase. General practice funding models must change to meet the needs of the community.

“COVID-19 has highlighted the underfunding of general practice for decades. Large financial incentives were needed to keep many practices viable.

“Telehealth – an innovation that the AMA has long advocated for - was implemented in the midst of pandemic to assist access and connection of patients with their usual GP at this time of critical challenge.

“The AMA 10-Year Framework identifies immediate funding goals to ease the financial pressures on general practice, and long-term reforms that should be implemented as part of the Federal Government’s 10-year Primary Health Care Plan.”

The AMA is calling for Federal Government spending on general practice services to be increased to at least a mandated 16 per cent of total health spending as part of a range of reforms to support general practice and improve access to GP care for all patients.

The AMA has made four key recommendations:

- Primary care reforms to build on the existing GP-led model of primary health care, which deliver high-quality, cost-effective outcomes for patients;
- The Government to work closely with the AMA and medical profession to develop and implement a suitable funding model to enable the transformation of general practice into a medical home;
- General practice to be adequately funded to reach its full potential and meet the increasingly complex healthcare needs of the community, involving a mandated 16 per cent of total health spending; and
- Continued investment in long-term strategies to ensure a sustainable medical workforce.

Delivering Better Care for Patients: The AMA 10-Year Framework for Primary Care Reform is available at <https://ama.com.au/article/delivering-better-care-patients-ama-10-year-framework-primary-care-reform>

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