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AMA PUBLIC HOSPITAL REPORT CARD SHOWS INCREASING PRESSURE ON HOSPITALS

Today's *AMA Public Hospital Report Card 2021* shows the increasing pressure that Queensland's health system will face when borders reopen in just over six weeks.

While the Report Card shows Queensland hospitals' performance has marginally improved over the past few years, these figures cover a time when hospitals were largely shut down due to COVID.

"Even with dramatically reduced patient volumes last year, our hospitals were still overwhelmed," AMA Queensland President Professor Chris Perry said today.

"When our borders open on 17 December, and we get inevitable outbreaks of COVID-19, we are going to see more pressure on our emergency departments.

"Most intensive care patients who need ventilating are there for a couple of days. Most COVID patients on ventilation are there for at least a couple of weeks.

"Resources are already at capacity and a vaccinated patient who's been in a car accident and might need two days in ICU may have limited access due to an unvaccinated patient who might need ventilation and intensive care for a month.

"Medical professionals will always give care to patients, no matter their circumstances. All we ask is that the community considers how they can best take care of themselves and each other."

AMA Queensland's Ramping Roundtable is putting together an action plan for Queensland Health to ease the pressure on emergency departments ahead of the border reopening.

This includes having more staff to manage beds in wards so that patients can move from emergency departments more quickly, freeing up beds to avoid situations like last month's unprecedented declaration of Code Yellows at four North Queensland hospitals on the same day.

AMA Queensland is also calling for public health orders to mandate COVID vaccinations for all health care workers, not just those employed by Queensland Health.

"GPs and other specialists in private practice need to ensure that their staff are fully vaccinated," AMA Queensland Council of General Practice Chair, Dr Maria Boulton, said.

"As a GP, I know that my staff are fully vaccinated. As a mum, I want to know that children who are too young to be vaccinated are safe."

Queensland figures:

- The percentage of emergency department urgent patients seen within 30 minutes rose from 61 per cent to 71 per cent.
- Emergency department visits completed within four hours or less rose slightly from 70 per cent to 71 per cent, just ahead of the national average of 69 per cent.

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- Category 2 elective surgery patients admitted within the recommended days fell from 92 per cent to 88 per cent, representing a continuing decline since 2016-17.

The AMA Public Hospital Report Card 2021 can be viewed [here](#).

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