

## FIVE HEALTH PRIORITIES FOR 2022-23 STATE BUDGET

### Media Release

8 June 2022

AMA Queensland has called for an urgent injection of more than \$2.34 billion into the health system to deliver five priority actions in this month's state budget.

"The Queensland health system's capacity, design and funding have failed to keep pace with state's growing and ageing population," AMA Queensland President Dr Maria Boulton said.

"It was already stretched to its limits before COVID-19. Workforce shortages were already deepening and staff were fatigued.

"The Omicron outbreak, combined with the reopening of borders and the winding back of public health measures, has led to thousands of healthcare workers being infected or furloughed as close contacts.

"Elective surgeries have been further delayed. Patients are waiting longer on ambulance stretchers to be admitted to emergency departments (EDs), let alone into overflowing hospital wards.

"Even this week, we have seen the mental health inquiry recommend a dedicated funding stream to meet urgent patient need in this area that could potentially relieve pressure on general practice which is at capacity.

"Plus persistent issues with digital healthcare technologies intended to make work easier, are only increasing inefficiencies and administrative burdens.

"Our budget submission is all too familiar with many common themes showing the lack of investment and forward planning by the State Government to give Queenslanders the healthcare they need and deserve.

"Each additional year without fundamental improvements in key areas has led to further entrenching of problems in the health system," said Dr Boulton.

AMA Queensland calls for investment in the following five priority actions.

- Implement the *Ramping Roundtable Action Plan*, starting with 1,500 more hospital beds across the state (>1.2 billion)
- Fill fundamental gaps in mental health (\$700 million)
- Address unmet need in palliative care (\$120.35 million)
- Make medical workplaces safe and healthy (\$1.67 million)
- Fix digital healthcare technologies (\$313 million).

"This will not be cheap, but you cannot put a price on good healthcare. The long-term benefits of a healthier population will pay for themselves over time, with fewer hospitalisations, reduced pressure on our ambulances and emergency departments, and better mental health."

The *AMA Queensland Budget Submission 2022-23* is available at [qld.ama.com.au](http://qld.ama.com.au).

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