

AMA QUEENSLAND BACKS NATIONAL PUBLIC HOSPITAL CAMPAIGN

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AMA Queensland has joined the national AMA campaign to make public hospital funding a federal election issue.

The *Clear the hospital logjam* campaign is aimed at fixing our over-stretched hospitals after decades of chronic underfunding.

“State and federal governments from both sides of politics have consistently undervalued and underfunded public hospitals for more than 30 years,” AMA Queensland President Professor Chris Perry said.

“This has led to the crisis we see with ambulance ramping, emergency department (ED) delays and hospital bed block.

“We hear a lot of talk about record funding, but we also have record population and record demand.

“Queenslanders don’t care which level of government is paying more or less of the costs – they just want to be able to access the first-rate medical care that they deserve.

“We need a new partnership hospital funding agreement between all governments to fix the structural issues that prevent our hospitals from operating effectively and sustainably.

“We also need better Medicare funding to help general practitioners to continue to provide strong primary health care and keep people out of hospitals. Medicare rebates have not kept pace with inflation or the cost of providing health care for more than three decades.

“Last year, AMA Queensland put together a dedicated group of emergency physicians and specialists from around the state to develop real, achievable actions to fix ED ramping and ease the pressure on our exhausted health care workforce.

“Our public hospitals are full and have been operating at capacity well before COVID. We presented our five-point action plan to government last year – it is time they started to act on it.”

The Ramping Roundtable Action Plan calls for:

- 1,500 more hospital beds across the State
- Employing and training enough staff to keep acute hospitals fully functional seven days a week, with extended hours
- Keeping hospitals operating at below 90 per cent capacity to allow for surges
- Detailed analysis of patient flow within hospitals, and
- Supporting alternative ways for patients to enter hospitals instead of through EDs.

The AMA *Clear the hospital logjam* campaign invites people to share their public hospital experiences, whether in emergency departments, waiting for essential surgery, or a specialist appointment.

Visit the new campaign website <https://www.ama.com.au/clear-the-hospital-logjam> to share your story or email hospitals@ama.com.au

CONTACT: media@amaq.com.au 0419 735 641