

Patients should not pay the price for digital disaster

Queensland doctors have called on the State Government to guarantee that funding needed to fix the health system's digital computer system will not come from patient services coffers.

Last week, the Queensland Audit Office revealed a cost blow-out of more than \$250 million for the Integrated Electronic Medical Record (ieMR) program, a system designed to digitise the state's public hospitals and health facilities.

Australian Medical Association (AMA) Queensland President Dr Dilip Dhupelia said the report revealed the additional funding was needed to complete the planned roll out of ieMR.

"Patient care must not be jeopardised or compromised in order to roll out Queensland Health's digital system," Dr Dhupelia said.

"The impact of this budget blow-out on hospitals needs to be clearly articulated and additional resources need to be sourced to correct the problem."

Dr Dhupelia also called on Queensland Health to engage closely with clinicians at the coal face of healthcare to ensure the digital system was enhancing the delivery of patient services.

"The Auditor's report also identified that the 2016 business case did not address issues such as the extra time clinicians need to spend on the new system to get their work done," he said.

"This also needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Doctors on the front line need adequate support and fast, effective solutions so they can continue to deliver quality healthcare to Queenslanders efficiently.

"They also need complete transparency to discuss their issues and learnings among peers in a state-wide online forum which has been denied by Queensland Health."

Dr Dhupelia said he had raised his concerns with Queensland Health Minister Steven Miles.

"AMA Queensland will continue to work closely and collaboratively with Queensland Health to ensure patient care funding is not jeopardised and clinicians are provided with efficient workplace programs so they can focus on their top priority of delivering healthcare to Queenslanders," he said.

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