

## **MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS \$700 MILLION A YEAR**

*AMA Queensland submission to Mental Health Inquiry*

**Media Release**  
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The Queensland Government must invest at least \$700 million a year into mental health services, particularly into services for new parents and their babies to cope with COVID-related restrictions and cutbacks.

AMA Queensland President Professor Chris Perry and Vice President Dr Bav Manoharan are giving evidence to the Queensland Parliament Select Committee today.

“Queensland spends the lowest of any state or territory on mental health,” Prof Perry said.

“At the same time, during COVID, we have seen a 28 per cent increase in presentations to emergency departments for mental health services, and a 50 per cent increase in presentations to GPs for patients seeking help for mental health conditions.

“Our members are also seeing an increase in mental health presentations from new parents. Many new mothers are reporting being discharged from hospital soon after giving birth, sometimes before they have learnt how to breastfeed and settle their baby.

“COVID restrictions mean they have also not been able to be part of baby groups or Community Child Health supports.

“We call on Queensland Health to increase the level of support for perinatal mental health by reintroducing Community Child Health sessions and increasing the number of mother-baby in-patient units across the state.”

In its submission to the Queensland Parliament’s Mental Health Select Committee Inquiry, AMA Queensland outlined five key areas for immediate action:

- Support increased use of technology
- Support additional mental health training and professional development for GPs
- Improve the pathway to treatment and care after a suicide attempt
- Ensure multi-functional service delivery centres to provide care for people with dual diagnoses
- Review mental health funding models

“Mental wellbeing is critical to all our health and wellbeing,” Dr Manoharan said.

“We need appropriate funding to keep people safe in the community and out of emergency departments wherever possible.”

AMA Queensland’s submission can be read in full [here](#).

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