

2016

DOCTORS DEMAND A BUDGET FIX FOR WAITING LIST LIMBO

AMA Queensland President Dr Chris Zappala said waiting lists have not improved under the Palaszczuk Government and too many sick people are forced to wait months, even years, in the dark.

“The state spends more than \$14 billion a year on health - that’s about \$3,000 per Queenslander – and we need to be much smarter about how and where that money is used,” Dr Zappala said.

“Instead of tinkering around the edges, like the unsuccessful trial of nurse endoscopists, the Government needs to bit the bullet and put on more surgeons and other specialists.”

“That’s the sure fire way to whittle down the waiting lists.”

In 2014-15, 90% of Queensland public hospital patients were seen within five months but a further 0.5% had to wait more than a year for treatment.* Dr Zappala said these figures only told part of the story.

“They don’t include the time patients have already waited for an initial appointment with a specialist, which can add several more months to the total time they’ve waited for treatment,” he said.

“The regions in particular are crying out for more specialists, and there’s no lache of doctors willing to be trained but the State Government has to open up the positions.”

AMA Queensland’s 2016 Budget submission calls for innovative solutions to the waiting list woes.

“Money should go into high-tech ideads like creating an online appointment tracker so that each patient can easily go online and see If they’re advancing on a waiting list, “Dr Zappala said.

“Many hospitals use real-time patient tracking data, so it shouldn’t be too difficult to provide the public with mobile-friendly information.

“It’s not fair for the sick and stressed to be left wondering if they’ll get treatment before it’s too late.”

AMA Queensland’s 2016 Budget Submission also calls for:

- An urgent assessment of the state’s palliative care needs.
- A new Queensland Medical Education Training Institute to improve junior doctor training.
- A state-wide trial of ‘Health-Hubs.’

To view AMA Queensland’s 2016 Budget submission visit www.amaq.com.au

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*Australian Institute of Health and Welfare – Elective Surgery Waiting times 2014-15