

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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### **AMA QUEENSLAND CALLS FOR QUEENSLAND-NSW BORDER BUBBLE**

AMA Queensland has called for the border check point between Queensland and New South Wales to be moved south to allow frontline health workers and patients easier access to hospitals and health care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

AMA Queensland President Professor Chris Perry said there were a number of public and private hospitals on the Gold Coast and in Tweed Heads where doctors, nurses and other frontline health staff lived on the opposite side of the border to their workplace.

“It can take hours for essential health workers to cross the border and get to work when the border between Queensland and New South Wales is closed,” he said.

“It’s also placing patients at risk by delaying their ability to get to hospitals for treatment.

“We fully agree with shutting the borders. It’s a necessary step to ensure we keep the Delta variant contained.

“But doctors and patients are reporting long queues at border check points and I fear the new regulations coming into place over the weekend will add further delays,” Prof Perry said.

As of 1am Saturday, essential workers must prove they have had at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine to cross the border.

“I think if we temporarily moved the check point just a few kilometres south, to a less populated part of Tweed Heads, we’d make it easier for health care workers and patients to access hospitals, while still obeying all the other restrictions, including stay-at-home orders for non-essential workers in New South Wales,” he said.

“Our frontline health workers have carried a heavy load during this pandemic and now the tight closing of the border between Queensland and New South Wales is adding further pressure to their lives and ability to care for others.

“We’re also concerned about other cross border communities, including people on rural stations on the South Australian side of the border who can’t drive to Birdsville for medical care, instead having to drive 800km to Port Augusta or call the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

“There are communities all across Australia that would benefit from carefully coordinated border bubbles that allow access to health care without risking a COVID outbreak.”

**FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES:** AMA Media 0419 735 641 [media@amaq.com.au](mailto:media@amaq.com.au)