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Doctors call for a shift in public health paradigm

COVID-19 has demonstrated the true value and expertise of Queensland's doctors and clinicians, but it has also exposed some cracks and defects in the health system.

In an *11-Point Action Plan*, released in the lead up to the October 31 state election, AMA Queensland is calling for a shift in the paradigm of public healthcare to one that includes doctors and frontline clinicians in the decision-making process about the delivery of care to patients.

Rather than bureaucrats focused on the bottom line, this would ensure patients were top of mind and central to all decision making. International evidence shows that good patient outcomes can be achieved and care can be delivered at low cost if decision making and governance is doctor lead.

The issues of particular importance to Queensland doctors are:

Palliative care remains grossly underfunded and under resourced in Queensland.

The evidence unveiled at the Royal Commission into Aged Care was a shameful indictment on the way our elderly and most vulnerable are treated.

Doctors are urging the State Government to invest \$277m in improving the care, awareness and training of palliative care so Queenslanders can die with the dignity they deserve.

AMA Queensland President Chris Perry said that AMA Queensland was calling on the State Government to fix the lack of pain management services across regional Queensland.

"The Queensland government released its own assessment of services in June 2020 and revealed chronic pain cost the state's economy \$27 billion per year.

"Now that the State Government has a clear picture of the extent of the lack of services available to Queenslanders, we are calling of \$26m in urgent action this year to creating new and expand existing services," he said.

Digital health has enormous potential to improve access and equity of health care to all Queenslanders. COVID-19 has only further demonstrated how vital a part of our health system it is.

AMA Queensland Vice President Bav Manoharan said doctors wanted the next State Government to invest \$313m into fixing the digital health debacle in Queensland and lobbying the Federal Government to retain telehealth, a service demonstrated to have great value throughout COVID.

The AMA Queensland action plan also called for:

- \$7.57m to boost maternity services in rural and regional communities
- \$3m to reduce community-based alcohol-related harm and violence
- \$4.2m to establish of a culturally safe First Nations Hospital and Health Network to access to specialist services.

- \$1.67m to improve doctors' mental health and workplace wellbeing

"We are calling on all political parties running in the October 31 election to respond to our *11-Point Action Plan - The Pathway to Better Health for Queenslanders* so that doctors and patients can make an informed decision at the ballot box," he said.

Read the full 11-Point Action Plan: The future health agenda [HERE](#).

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