

# POSITION STATEMENT

## Task substitution - 2020



---

### Introduction

AMA Queensland has developed this position statement to help the community, universities, non-government organisations and policy makers to understand that any decision to support task substitution, including people working outside their scope of training, will result in an increased risk to public safety, a reduced standard of quality care and reduced confidence in the health system.

### Background

Since 2017, the Queensland Health Minister has made numerous decisions supporting task substitution which AMA Queensland believe negatively impact public health and the health of the community.

Examples include:

- Supporting a pharmacist prescribing trial providing authority for pharmacists to prescribe (and dispense) antibiotics for conditions such as UTI's without seeing a doctor
- Supporting a physiotherapist prescribing trial providing authority for physiotherapists to prescribe S2, S3, S4 and S8 medications in emergency departments in public hospitals
- Supporting midwife-led maternity services without obstetrician oversight/involvement in rural and remote communities
- Diverting patients who have a referral to a specialist to be seen by other health practitioners (including allied health), and
- Supporting nurse navigators to work outside their scope of training.

While AMA Queensland does not support non-medical prescribing, patient safety and care can be supported by applying the AMA Minimum Standards for Prescribing <https://ama.com.au/position-statement/ama-10-minimum-standards-prescribing>.

AMA Queensland believes task substitution reduces the role of doctors as the leading primary carer in Queensland communities as it supports other health practitioners to complete tasks previously completed by doctors and affects training opportunities for doctors which may lead to a reduction in the number of service registrars and PGY 2-3 doctors in emergency departments and outpatient clinics.

### AMA Queensland Position

AMA Queensland supports doctor led collaborative multi-disciplinary health care.

AMA Queensland does not support task substitution including people working outside their scope of training including physiotherapists and pharmacists being granted authority to prescribe, nurse navigators working outside their scope of training and allowing patients who have a referral to a specialist to be seen by other health practitioners (including allied health).

AMA Queensland believes this creates a risk of inappropriate care, risks public safety and effects quality of access to basic healthcare needs and specialist care.