

MEDIA RELEASE

SUN 19 MAY 2024

Hospital figures must consider regional Queenslanders

The slight improvement in elective surgery wait times revealed in the Queensland Government's latest hospital data tells us what we already know – that regional Queenslanders are still missing out.

Many regional patients remain more likely to experience adverse health outcomes or end up in emergency departments due to the continued inequity in elective surgery access, and more must be done to change this trajectory.

"Every single Queenslanders deserves to receive essential healthcare within the recommended timeframes," AMA Queensland President Dr Maria Boulton said.

"Any reduction to the time patients are forced to wait for surgery that they need to continue living their daily lives is a positive, but we must ensure improvements are felt by every patient.

"As Queensland is such a decentralised state, one statistic should never tell the whole story.

"In many Hospital and Health Services (HHSs), far less than the current eight in 10 average patients are receiving treatment within the recommended timeframes.

"Nearly 40 per cent of Mackay patients were forced to wait longer than recommended time according to the government's latest data.

"Central Queensland and Townsville also continued to experience longer wait times than their metropolitan counterparts during this period.

"This issue is not going to disappear overnight, which is why AMA Queensland announced its new Surgical Wait List Roundtable to identify practical, affordable actions the Government can take to address inequities in access.

"The Roundtable is set to convene mid-2024 with monthly online meetings attended by clinicians from a wide range of specialties across a variety of HHSs.

"We know workforce is key issue when it comes to addressing these wait times and are confident all members of the Roundtable will lean on their experiences working on the frontlines to provide tangible recommendations."

Background:

- The Surgical Wait List Roundtable follows the success of the AMA Queensland Ramping Roundtable in 2021, where the State Government adopted most of our Ramping Action Plan.
- The AMA Queensland Ramping Roundtable Action Plan is available [here](#).

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