

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Backbone needed: State Budget must put workforce at the centre of health

The state government must use the June budget to tell Queenslanders how it is going to recruit and train the doctors they need by 2032.

Newly-elected AMA Queensland President, Associate Professor Erica Gannon said there is no greater priority for the health portfolio than delivering a workforce plan.

“Last year, the government’s own workforce gap analysis identified that without strong intervention, Queensland will have a shortfall of nearly 6000 doctors by 2032.

“It’s now up to the Premier, Treasurer and Health Minister to explain to Queenslanders how they’re going to attract those clinicians and get them to where they’re needed right across regional and rural Queensland.

“Without that backbone of support, the muscles of the health system cannot function.”

AMA Queensland’s pre-budget submission contains key priorities the government should implement for a fit and functional health workforce:

- Use AMA Queensland’s own profession-led Workforce Action Plan as part of the Queensland Health blueprint for growing the medical workforce
- Simplify training pathways to reduce stress and burnout among doctors, and campaign for a national independent health workforce planning agency to tie training numbers to need
- Fully implement the recommendations of AMA Queensland’s Surgical Wait List Action Plan to reduce bed block and hidden waiting lists for planned surgery, and boost the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme to support rural and regional patients
- Improve leadership development among doctors and reduce the risks doctors face in speaking out on issues of concern
- Support measures such as a wellbeing registrar initiative to reduce fatigue that compromises performance, and champion reform of regulatory processes
- Promote innovation in collaborative, evidence-based practice, such as expanding holistic, team-based care and ensuring doctors can practice at the top of their scope
- Invest in digital integration to ensure primary and tertiary care systems operate efficiently to reduce both health practitioner workload and patient frustration

“Without decisive action, the state’s health system will continue to deteriorate under the weight of rising demand, chronic staff shortages and unsafe workloads,” Dr Gannon said.

“The consequences are already visible, and felt most acutely in the regions, where patients experience higher rates of avoidable deaths, cancer, low birthweight babies and delayed antenatal care.

“Queenslanders deserve a budget with backbone.”