

MEDIA RELEASE

TUESDAY 23 JUNE 2026

Queensland Budget 2026: Business as usual for health sector

The 2026/27 Queensland budget has taken a “business as usual” approach to the health sector, according to the state’s peak doctors organisation.

AMA Queensland President, Associate Professor Erica Gannon, said the \$35.5 billion dollar health budget represented only a 7.25% increase on last year’s.

“We needed the health budget to grow by more than 9% just to keep pace with increased population, demand and CPI.

“While we always welcome all health investment, Queenslanders are struggling to get health care now, especially in our regional areas.”

Assoc Prof Gannon said new spending in this year’s budget included \$297 million for Surgery Connect.

“This is a short-term measure that will help bring down surgical waiting lists, but we need to increase public hospital capacity to deliver more timely treatment to Queenslanders no matter where they live.

“We acknowledge the modest increase in the fuel rebate component of the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme.

“The extra 11 cents per kilometre will give some relief to rural and regional Queenslanders forced to travel for the treatment they need, but increased investment in public hospital funding would allow more of these patients to be treated closer to home.”

AMA Queensland was also disappointed not to see the government’s workforce plan released today.

Queensland Health’s own data shows the state needs 6000 extra doctors by 2032.

“Doctors, nurses and allied health professionals form the backbone of our health workforce,” Assoc Prof Gannon said.

“We acknowledge workforce planning is a complex issue but we need to see the government’s plan on how it intends to build our future workforce to fill the projected shortfalls.

“Without a long term plan we can’t attract and keep doctors in places and specialities where they’re needed.”

Also missing from the budget were details on how and when the state’s mental health levy will be spent.

“Queenslanders rightly want these funds spent on programs that keep people out of crisis mental health situations.

“People must get mental health care as well as screening programs, specialist appointments and elective surgery when they need it.”