

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Faint pulse: Federal budget underwhelms on health

This year's federal budget lacks inspiration for true reform of Australia's health system, according to peak doctors' organisation AMA Queensland.

President Dr Nick Yim said while there were no unexpected shocks in the economic blueprint, there was also little ambition.

"We would have liked to have seen a bigger uplift to public hospital funding to reach 50/50 with the states," he said.

"Australians deserve proper investment in their public hospitals, no matter where they live, and the uplift has to come from Canberra."

Dr Yim welcomed \$3.7 billion to deliver more services to older Australians, including 5000 extra aged care beds each year.

"We know bed block is a critical factor in long waiting lists for planned surgery in our public hospitals, and the more stranded patients we can get out of hospitals into more appropriate aged care arrangements, the better," he said.

"We also applaud the federal government for making RSV immunisations free for Australians 75 and older and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders over age of 60."

Dr Yim also welcomed \$3.2 million for consultations on private health sector reforms.

"It's an acknowledgement that the real value of private health insurance continues to fall but will be of cold comfort to those shelling out more after recent premium increases."

Dr Yim said the lack of any indication of an increase to Medicare rebates would be the most frustrating for doctors and patients.

"The cost of healthcare is rising, and all Australians deserve bigger rebates to help cover those expenses.

"Instead, the government has increased funding to inefficient, lower quality models that cost taxpayers more, like Urgent Care Clinics and government funded GP clinics," he said.

"What doctors and patients deserve is broad, structural reform of our medical workforce, particularly our medical training pipelines, coupled with comprehensive planning to get highly skilled medical practitioners to the areas they're needed most.

"Until that is addressed, this budget offers little other than more of the same."