



**AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) INC.**

ABN 91 028 693 268

7 November 2022

Ms Ashton Hurn MP
Member for Schubert

E: schubert@parliament.sa.gov.au

Dear Ms Hurn

Re: Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Bill introduced by the Hon Frank Pangallo MLC that seeks to mandate the installation and registration of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in designated buildings, facilities and vehicles.

In developing this response, I have sought the opinions of those members of the AMA in South Australia whose roles lead them to care for patients with cardiac issues on a daily basis, including cardiologists and emergency physicians.

AMA(SA) believes there is strong evidence of the value of having AEDs in as many public and private facilities and spaces as possible, to help save many of the Australians who die from cardiac arrests. The Australian Genetic Heart Disease Registry website indicates that sudden cardiac arrest claims the lives of more than 22,000 Australians each year, and that 'immediate CPR and defibrillation in the first few minutes' may save a person's life. The introduction and ready availability of any tool that could prevent even a few of these deaths should be considered by a government wishing to ensure its citizens have access to world-class health care. Now, with the Therapeutic Goods Administration approving the sale of the 'hand-held' CellaAED – a device the manufacturer's website indicates costs \$360 for a single use or \$359 plus a monthly fee of \$16.50 'for life' – there are lower-cost options than those costing around \$2,000.

However, we understand that many businesses would not feel they were in a position to pay for the installation and maintenance of AEDs, and for the training that – depending on the type – may be required upon installation and on an ongoing basis. We understand that there is little training needed; however, business personnel may require some education and practical knowledge to feel confident in using the equipment in emergency situations.

It has been suggested that the gathering and promotion of more information about the benefits of the devices and the lives they have saved may make business owners more willing to pay for the devices. Independent, non-commercial information that outlines the cost per heart attack, for example, could support such promotion.

However, it has been pointed out that it is not yet mandated that all vehicles that carry patients to and from hospitals and health facilities in South Australia are fitted with permanent defibrillators. If this is the case, we recommend that the fitting of AEDs in all

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Postal: PO Box 685 Fullarton SA 5065
Phone: (08) 8361 0100 Fax: (08) 8267 5349

Level 1 175 Fullarton Road, Dulwich SA 5065
Email: admin@amasa.org.au Web site: www.amasa.org.au

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ambulances, including those operated by private providers, should be mandated, and that the requirement that public transport services such as buses, trains and trams, should also be considered.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this at any time. Please contact me via my Executive Assistant, Mrs Claudia Baccanello, on 8361 0109 or at president@amasa.org.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M Atchison', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr Michelle Atchison

BM, BS, FRANZCP, GDipArtHist

President

Australian Medical Association (SA)