



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

ABN 91 028 693 268

**FRONTLINE DOCTORS FRUSTRATED BY SA GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO HEALTH
SYSTEM WARNINGS**

As South Australian hospitals confront a perfect storm of illness, AMA(SA) is concerned and frustrated that the South Australian Government is not listening to warnings from frontline medical specialists.

President Dr John Williams said the 'code yellow' emergencies demonstrate that the hospital system is constantly at capacity, so patients are concerned that they will be denied care or spend hours ramped outside our major hospitals.

'The government needs to keep people out of hospital,' Dr Williams said. 'Patients need primary care to prevent them seeking the treatment they need from hospital EDs. The cancellation of planned, essential surgeries adds to the burden of illness in our communities and to the inadequacies of a health system already suffocating.'

'We are calling on the State Government to outline long-term solutions and strategies it will deliver to manage the problems plaguing the health system.'

'We hope and expect this week's Budget will do just that - provide funding to address system capacity and workforce issues, and will demonstrate the government understands a connected system of primary and tertiary care is what will work best to keep people out of hospital.'

The AMA(SA) remains concerned that the payroll tax on private medical specialists, which is due to come into effect in less than a month, will compound existing problems.

Despite some recent concessions from the State Government, Dr Williams says the tax will add prohibitive costs that could lead patients to avoid important private consultations with GPs and other specialists.

'At a time when the system is under significant pressure it is counterproductive to forge ahead with a tax that will put further specialist services at risk.'

'In the midst of an escalating crisis in our public hospitals, the AMA(SA) is imploring the Health Minister and the Premier to listen to doctors' concerns and urgently explain its strategies to ease the pressure on patients and doctors across the state.'

For more information or interview requests please contact Dr John Williams on 0417 804 212 or Media and Communications Advisor Ben Terry on 0478 847 604.