

6 September 2024

The Hon Matt Keogh MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

By email: [REDACTED]

Subject: Delays contacting Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre

Dear Minister

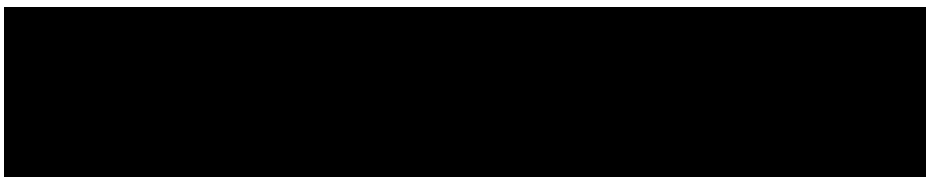
AMA Queensland members have contacted us frustrated about lengthy delays in contacting the Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre (VAPAC). Doctors report regular delays of 10 minutes and up to 30 minutes in some cases but have been advised by the Department that their system is not showing wait times of that magnitude, other than potentially during 'peak periods'.

As you know, many doctors and their families have served in the Australian Defence Forces and want to provide high quality care to our veterans. They advise they are increasingly reluctant to accept these patients though due to the inadequacy of DVA rates. The impost of further costs on medical practitioners by way of wasted time, particularly time they could spend treating their patients, is likely to worsen veterans' access to health care.

We understand the Department is investigating broader options for practitioners to contact VAPAC, including online platforms. We would be grateful for an update on those investigations, including the likely reforms and timeframes for implementation, that we can share with our members.

AMA Queensland and the medical profession respects and acknowledges the contributions made by our returned services personnel. We encourage the Department to rectify the current cause of the delays as a matter of urgency to ensure ongoing continuity of care for our veterans.

Yours sincerely



Dr Nick Yim
President
AMA Queensland

Dr Brett Dale
Chief Executive Officer
AMA Queensland