

2016

BETTER MODEL NEEDED FOR QUEENSLAND MATERNITY SERVICES

AMA Queensland President Dr Chris Zappala has welcomed the findings of an independent review of Rockhampton Hospital's maternity ward and echoed the importance of ongoing training, strong leadership and appropriate staff-to-patient ratios.

Dr Zappala said it was important that the review, commissioned in February, be used to improve patient care not just in Rockhampton, but across the state.

"Queensland has some of the best obstetricians in the world and it's important that the appropriate policies and procedures are in place to allow them to properly do their job without being sidelined. Maternal and fetal risk is lowest with obstetrician-led care.

"We cannot understate the importance of non-medical health practitioners, including midwives, in providing safe, quality care as part of a health care team. However, we know that health outcomes improve when maternity services are led by Australia's highly trained obstetricians, especially when complications are threatened or arise, so that appropriate treatment can be quickly provided.

"Obstetricians across the state have echoed many of the concerns outlined in the Rockhampton review, underpinning a need for better processes, documentation and teamwork."

Dr Zappala said he would work with the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, as well as other stakeholders, to achieve ongoing service improvement.

He urged other hospitals across the state to also review their maternity care.