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**HEALTH DEBATE MUST FILL THE GAPS IN OVERARCHING
 HEALTH VISION**

The AMA is calling on Health Minister, Greg Hunt, and Shadow Health Minister, Catherine King, to use today’s Health Policy Debate at the National Press Club to fill the gaps in their respective overarching visions for the future health system in Australia.

AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, said that the AMA has welcomed announcements from the major parties of new funding and strategies for public hospitals, cancer care, primary care, dental care for pensioners and seniors, Indigenous health, the lifting of the Medicare rebate freeze, and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), among others.

“The AMA will compare and contrast these policies and publicly rate them accordingly before election day,” Dr Bartone said.

“But we need to see the major parties announcing the missing pieces from their health care vision over the next two-and-a-half weeks, starting today.

“As the population ages and more people are living longer with multiple complex and chronic conditions, it is vital that Australia has a robust, connected, and holistic strategy to ensure improved health outcomes for patients throughout life.

“The big gaps include aged care, broad mental health strategies, comprehensive primary care and general practice investment, the private health sector, and prevention.

“The Australian health system is one of the best in the world, if not the best. But it will take strong leadership, hard work, good policy with long-term strategic vision, and significant well-targeted funding to keep it working efficiently to meet growing community demand.

“The health system has many parts, and they are all linked. Governments cannot concentrate on a few, and neglect the others. Otherwise, patients will be the ultimate losers. Whole patient care cannot be done in silos, in parts, or in isolation.

“Health is the best investment that any government can make. We expect to hear more detail on their intended investment from the major parties at the National Press Club today,” Dr Bartone said.

The AMA’s health policy wish list - *Key Health Issues for the 2019 Federal Election* - is available at <https://ama.com.au/article/key-health-issues-2019-federal-election>

The AMA will issue a health policy scorecard in the final week of the campaign.

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