

**Australian Medical Association Limited**

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**AMA WELCOMES MEDICAL COLLEGES’ SUPPORT FOR CURRENT MEDEVAC LEGISLATION**

The AMA supports today’s call by the Presidents of eleven highly respected Medical Colleges for the Australian Parliament to maintain the existing Medevac legislation and the Independent Health Advice Panel (IHAP) process.

It reflects the AMA position and years of strong AMA advocacy to ensure quality health care for asylum seekers and refugees.

AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, said that the AMA – with the backing of the Colleges – has consistently proposed and supported a body of clinical experts, independent of government, with the power to investigate and advise on the health and welfare of asylum seekers and refugees.

“Today’s united call from the esteemed Medical Colleges is consistent with the long-held AMA position that those who are in the care of the Australian Government and who are seeking, or who have been granted, asylum within Australia have the right to receive appropriate medical care without discrimination, regardless of citizenship, visa status, or ability to pay,” Dr Bartone said.

“Over the last couple of months, I have met Home Affairs Minister, Peter Dutton, and the Home Affairs Department Chief Medical Officer, Dr Parbodh Gogna, to reiterate the AMA’s strong support for Medevac and the ongoing work of IHAP.

“The AMA has a representative on IHAP.

“IHAP is working as intended and the Parliament should continue to support and properly resource it into the future.

“The AMA believes IHAP must be better supported in its important work to assess the needs of asylum seekers and refugees for transfers for medical and psychiatric assessment and treatment.

“Asylum seekers and refugees in Australia or in offshore detention, in the care of the Australian Government, should be treated with compassion, respect, and dignity,” Dr Bartone said.

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