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**DRAFT MBS REVIEW REPORT CALLS FOR NEW INVESTMENT IN  
 GENERAL PRACTICE**

In responding to the draft report of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) General Practice and Primary Care Clinical Committee (GPPCCC), the AMA has welcomed its call for greater funding for general practice.

“The AMA applauds the approach to reform adopted by the GPPCCC, which has focused on GP stewardship of the health system, strengthening the concept of the ‘usual doctor’, and supporting comprehensive, patient-centred, multi-disciplinary care,” AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, said today.

“The report recognises that high-quality, patient-centred primary health care is key to improving effectiveness of care, preventing illness, and reducing inequality, variation, and health system costs.

“The GPPCCC’s call to strengthen general practice and primary care is based on the best available international evidence.

In giving cautious support to many of the recommendations of the draft report of the GPPCCC, the AMA has emphasised the need for proposals to be fully costed and warned against simply making cuts without the necessary reinvestment.

“While the GPPCCC makes some recommendations that would see some MBS rebates cut, it makes it very clear that not only should these savings be reinvested in general practice, they also need to be backed by additional new funding,” Dr Bartone said.

“Any failure to do so will not only be a breach of trust with the Australian community and the patients who doctors care for, but a callous disregard for the centrality of general practice as a lynchpin of our world class health system.

“The broad thrust of the GPPCCC report provides a chance to recognise the benefit of short to medium term investment in general practice, with the promise of long-term improvements in healthcare outcomes for patients, and savings to the health system.

“With both a Federal Budget and Federal Election approaching, the report is a timely reminder to all political parties that continued chronic underinvestment in general practice is a poor prescription for the future of our health system - a prescription that ultimately will leave Australia with a two-class health system, not predicated on equity of access but on ability to pay, and see Australia lose its world class reputation for health care.

“However, despite supporting much of the direction of the GPPCCC report, the AMA rejects its suggestion that time thresholds are included for standard GP consultations and GP chronic disease management plans.

“With an increasing focus on value, using volume-based measures like time is simply not a useful measure of a consultation.

“The AMA priorities for investment in general practice are detailed in our 2019 Pre-Budget Submission. We call on all major parties to release their general practice policies well ahead of the next election.”

The AMA Pre-Budget Submission is at [https://ama.com.au/sites/default/files/budget-submission/AMA\\_Budget\\_Submission\\_2019\\_20.pdf](https://ama.com.au/sites/default/files/budget-submission/AMA_Budget_Submission_2019_20.pdf)

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