



HEALTH | COMMUNITY | WELLBEING

SHADOW MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Hon S G Wade MLC
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Adelaide, South Australia 5000

E stephen.wade@parliament.sa.gov.au
T 08 8237 9563 F 08 8212 7075
SA [countrycall 1800 182 097](tel:1800182097)

www.stephenwade.com.au

Associate Professor William Tam
President
Australian Medical Association (SA) Inc.
PO Box 134
North Adelaide SA 5006

Dear Assoc Professor Tam

I write on behalf of the Liberal Party to provide a response to the AMA(SA)'s *A People-First Health Strategy for South Australia: Election Priorities 2018*, in particular to provide an overview of relevant policy commitments.

As the election is in a month's time, a number of health policies have not yet been released. I will endeavour to provide the AMA(SA) with copies of these policies as they are released.

Engagement with clinicians and communities

Health reform in South Australia have been severely and negatively impacted by the failure of both the management of SA Health and the Weatherill Government to effectively engage clinicians and communities.

The Liberal Party considers that health services will only develop as quality, safe, cost-effective services, if clinicians are engaged.

The Liberal Party has already announced key measures to improve engagement with clinicians. These include our commitments to establish a [Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health](#) and to decentralise the public health system through the establishment of [boards of management for each Local Health Network](#). Importantly, clinicians will be included in the membership of each board and boards will also be required to develop a formal clinical engagement strategy.

Health data and analytics

The effective development and utilisation of data is vital in service development and system planning. What has been sorely lacking in recent years has been a transparent and respectful conversation about the data and its interpretation. The Liberal Party agrees with the AMA(SA) that “a culture of excellence implies ongoing independent evaluation and review.” We are open to engaging independent university research units as part of a strategy to properly manage and utilise data. Nonetheless, health management within the Government of South Australia will need to maintain its own capacity for data analysis to meet its business needs.

Expanded Service Delivery

We agree with the AMA(SA) that the “centralised model of emergency care is not working well for patients and staff”. The Association’s call for our secondary hospitals to be equipped to deal with a broader surgical and medical case mix, accords with our policies in relation to [The Queen Elizabeth](#), [Modbury](#) and [Noarlunga Hospitals](#).

Following a halving of critical care beds in NALHN under Transforming Health, we share the AMA(SA)’s concern about the shortage of critical care beds in our northern hospitals. We note that we differ on whether some of these beds should be based at Modbury Hospital.

A Marshall Liberal Government will spend [\\$110 million upgrading Modbury Hospital](#) facilities and services, including the construction of a 16-bed purpose-built hospice.

Co-located Women’s and Children’s Hospital

We acknowledge the AMA(SA)’s strong and consistent advocacy for a new co-located Women’s and Children’s Hospital. It would be a retrograde step for a South Australian Government to fragment the current integrated services for women and children that have developed over the last two decades or seek to deliver children’s hospital services in a standalone, tired facility for years to come.

A Marshall Liberal Government will deliver best practice health services for women and children by [building a new Women’s and Children’s Hospital](#) co-located with the Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH).

In our first 100 days, we will establish a high-level task force to drive the project and develop a fully-costed project plan, with a view to achieving co-location by 2024.

The task force will include clinicians and their health professional and industrial organisations. Engaging health professionals is crucial to avoid a

repeat of the poor planning processes that led to the budget blow-out, the design and planning flaws and ongoing operational challenges with the new RAH.

Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing

The Liberal Party recognises the need to promote the development of children and young people in a wholistic way, intervening early to support their health and wellbeing.

Our health commitments for children and young people include commitments to a \$4 million [paediatric eating disorder service](#) and a focus on young people within a \$10 million [Borderline Personality Disorder program](#) delivering dedicated, ongoing inpatient, outpatient and therapeutic resources for young people at risk of developing BPD or with early signs of BPD (including self-harming behaviour).

Commitments in other portfolios include promoting aquatic safety, drug education in schools, and the appointment of an Aboriginal Children's Commissioner.

Independent Review of EPAS

Our hospital network must have access to a reliable, intuitive, clinically-safe and clinically-appropriate electronic patient record system.

In this context, we share the AMA(SA)'s concerns with regard to the functionality of the Electronic Patient Administration System (EPAS).

If elected in March, a Marshall Liberal Government will immediately suspend the roll-out of EPAS to further hospital sites and commission an Independent Review of EPAS' functionality, performance and long-term prospects.

The Independent Review will be tasked with working out if SA Health should progress with the implementation of EPAS and, if so, the likely cost of addressing its known problems and drawbacks. A recommendation that EPAS cannot or should not be salvaged, would need to provide a clear, cost-effective pathway to a more suitable, robust patient administration system.

We recognise the importance of involving the AMA(SA) and other health professional and industrial organisations in steps taken to address EPAS' problems and shortcomings.

Outpatient Clinic Waiting Times

If elected on 17 March, the Liberal Party is committed to ensuring doctors and patients have access to accurate information on [outpatient clinic waiting times](#).

Specifically, from 1 July 2018 onwards, we will release information on outpatient clinic waiting times on a quarterly basis by speciality and by hospital. Such information will be available online. We acknowledge the AMA(SA)'s advocacy of transparency in this area.

Integrated Care

The Liberal Party recognises the leadership that the AMA(SA) has shown in promoting integrated care. We believe that, given the disconnects in existing funding arrangements, we need to develop active partnerships to support multidisciplinary teams, integrated care and improvements in patient outcomes.

The Liberal Party commitment to invest in [preventative health](#) – including our aim to pursue [targeted interventions](#) – reflect our commitment to integrating care.

Rural Health Workforce

We agree with the AMA(SA) that country practitioners are working under significant stress. We will act urgently to address the backlog in capital works in country hospitals. Our \$20 million [rural health workforce strategy](#) is designed to plan for, deliver and sustain a health workforce to support quality, safe health services in the country.

Mental Health Services for rural and remote areas

A Marshall Liberal Government will deliver a statewide mental health service plan within 12 months of forming Government. The service plan will convert the recently released *SA Mental Health Strategic Plan 2017-2022* into a detailed plan to develop services and deliver tangible outcomes, including for country South Australians.

Increased support for rural generalists, a key part of our [rural health workforce strategy](#), should help strengthen the mental health workforce in the country.

Doctor's welfare

The Liberal Party recognises that health professionals need to be supported by quality facilities, sustainable working conditions and a respectful workplace culture. Government will need to work with health profession colleges and representative bodies to drive cultural change in SA Health and within the workforce.

The new Royal Adelaide Hospital

The Liberal Party shares the Association's concern at the growing number of operational and design problems at the new Royal Adelaide Hospital and the serious consequences they are having on the delivery of timely and

quality care. We recognise that these problems need to be urgently addressed, including securing appropriate sites for the respiratory and eye services. The Liberal Party recognises that these problems will not be solved without the involvement of frontline clinicians and organisations.

Facilities for older people with severe dementia and mental health issues

The Liberal Party shares the AMA(SA)'s strong concern about the current lack of appropriate facilities for older South Australians with BPSD and other mental health issues. Since the release of Chief Psychiatrist's report into Oakden, there has been a dramatic reduction in suitable long-term accommodation for this group of extremely vulnerable South Australians.

As part of our commitment to retain the [Repat site as a health precinct](#), a Marshall Liberal Government would look to utilise Ward 18 as accommodation for people with BPSD.

Policies in other portfolios

The Liberal Party recognises AMA(SA)'s strong commitment to improving the lives and wellbeing of South Australians more broadly and that, to this end, it addresses issues that fall outside the health portfolio.

In that context, I respectfully draw your attention to the following commitments of the Liberal Party:

- [introduce a system of registration for social workers](#)
- [reform the recruitment practices for child protection measures](#)
- appoint an [Aboriginal Children's Commissioner](#)
- make [foster care and kinship care payments](#) available for people up to the age of 21
- [tackle bullying in schools](#) through a range of measures,

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen Wade". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hon Stephen Wade MLC
Shadow Minister for Health and Wellbeing