



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) INC**

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The RAH of the future: what it needs

AMA(SA) President Dr Andrew Lavender today welcomed the continued acknowledgement by both major parties that a substantial rebuild or refurbishment of the RAH is required, whilst stressing that quality of healthcare for South Australians is about improving the health system as a whole.

'SA has suffered from an underinvestment in health infrastructure over many decades,' said Dr Lavender.

'All of our major hospitals have needed – and remain in need – of substantial renewal. The Royal Adelaide Hospital itself, as our busiest hospital and main trauma centre, is critically in need of major renovation.

'Facilities at the RAH are already at capacity and the new or redeveloped RAH must meet foreseeable demand for the future – a future with escalating demand for health services and an ageing and expanding population.

'Any policy proposal for the RAH going forward must be able to deliver:

- Expanded bed numbers.
- Expanded and upgraded Acute Service areas including trauma management, Intensive Care, Accident and Emergency, operating theatre, and investigation and imaging facilities.
- Expanded space for teaching and research.
- Maintenance of existing service activity during any rebuild or development.
- A defined timeline to provide all facilities, as soon as possible and without risk of deferral.

The AMA(SA) welcomes the proposal from the Liberal Party to increase the number of beds at the RAH to 1000 single room beds. This expansion in bed capacity is sorely needed in South Australia.

'However, the AMA(SA) is of the firm view that the Intensive Care, A&E, Theatres and imaging areas – the 'engine room' of the hospital – will not support SA's ageing and growing population or the expansion in bed numbers without substantial expansion and upgrading. We note that the current proposal does not include planning or funding for this essential work.'

'Doctors and their patients need to know what future plans the Liberals have to re-develop the non-bed, core parts of the existing RAH over the next 10 years.'

'We welcome the Liberal's savings goal of one billion dollars of taxpayers' money, but affirm that this money must be invested in health infrastructure, rather than used to meet recurrent costs. A substantial portion of this money must inevitably be spent at the RAH, in expanding and upgrading Acute facilities to meet community needs for a world-class trauma centre.

'Of course, we must never forget that the RAH is only one component of an integrated health system, which includes other major hospitals, the critical relationship with general practice and health services to rural patients. Any additional capital available for spending in these areas is welcome.'

'More information is needed about both the RAH redevelopment and the New RAH proposal, if we are to be truly able to compare 'apples with apples'.

'The AMA(SA) insists that the competing proposals must deliver South Australians an equivalent facility that meets their needs for a world-class trauma centre and hospital.

'South Australians deserve world-class hospital facilities, so that the world-class staff currently working in their interests can continue to provide the health care that our community deserves,' concluded Dr Lavender.

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