



Private Healthcare Australia Supports Health System Reform

Private Healthcare Australia (PHA) Chief Executive Dr Rachel David said the Opposition's proposal to establish an expert commission to oversee long term health reform was a positive step towards ensuring the sustainability of Australia's healthcare system.

"An Australian Health Care Reform Commission should be truly independent, well resourced, capable of delivering results and prepared to tackle the hard reforms," Dr David said.

"Australia still has one of the best health systems in the world but increasing healthcare costs coupled with the pressures associated with an ageing population, and an increasing incidence of chronic disease, means that inevitably some hard decisions will have to be made in the future to ensure all Australians can continue to have access to the level of care we currently enjoy.

"With healthcare costs rising by five percent annually, it is more important than ever for policy makers to get serious about further reform and commit to maintain the balance between the private and public healthcare sectors.

"PHA also welcomes the announcement today that one of the Commission's first priorities will be to scrutinise health consumers' access to specialists in hospital outpatient clinics. Long waits for public hospital outpatient appointments, and increasing out-of-pocket costs to see a private specialist in the community, are issues of major concern for consumers.

"There is no question that further reforms are needed to keep Australia's healthcare system sustainable, but success will require sensible stakeholder engagement and genuine commitment across the political divide," Dr David said.

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About Private Healthcare Australia

Private Healthcare Australia is the peak representative body for Australia's private health insurance industry. PHA represents 22 Australian health funds with a combined membership of 13 million Australians, or 97% of the sector on membership. Promoting the value of private health insurance to consumers in the Australian economy and keeping premiums affordable for our members is the number one priority of PHA members.