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**CLINICAL TEACHING FUNDING WELCOME BUT BROADER
FUNDING AND RESOURCES NEEDED TO BE TRULY EFFECTIVE**

The AMA welcomes today's announcement that funding to support clinical training, which was agreed at the November 2008 COAG meeting, will now start to flow.

AMA President, Dr Andrew Pesce, said this initial round of funding is urgently needed and is a good start to addressing the training needs of Australia's future medical workforce.

Medical student numbers are growing rapidly. In 2007, there were 1,544 domestic medical graduates, an increase of 22 per cent from 2003. This is projected to increase to 2,920 graduates by 2012.

Dr Pesce said Australia currently doesn't have the teaching resources in place to cope with the increase in student numbers.

"Our health system cannot afford to lose doctors because of a lack of training opportunities and poorly supported training environments," Dr Pesce said.

"Public hospital medical training is at breaking point now, and there is the risk it will collapse under the weight of the greater numbers of medical graduates in the system.

"The funding announced today will largely be focused on undergraduate clinical training, but medical training does not stop at the University gate.

"The Government must now look at expanding the number of training places for pre-vocational doctors and specialists.

"The AMA estimates that, without further support, there will be a deficit of over 1500 intern places in 2012.

"We have written to Minister Roxon urging her to use the new Health Workforce Australia (HWA) organisation to provide specific extra support for pre-vocational and specialist training."

The AMA proposal to the Minister covers:

- Dedicated teaching and training time for senior clinicians,
- Development of more innovative training for interns,
- Professional development programs to enhance the teaching capacity of junior doctors, and
- Pre-vocational training positions in community settings.

"We note the recent appointment of Mr Mark Cormack as CEO of Health Workforce Australia, and the AMA is keen to work with him and his team to ensure Australia's medical training needs for the future are properly planned and met," Dr Pesce said.

For further background on the problems confronting medical training in Australia, refer to the recently released AMA junior doctor training, education and supervision survey at www.ama.com.au/node/5202

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