MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Medical Association Limited
ABN 37 008 426 793

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604
Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499
Website : http://www.ama.com.au/

AMA

ONUS ON GOVERNMENT TO PASS BILL TO GIVE CERTAINTY TO CATARACT SURGERY PATIENTS

With the cataract surgery Medicare items disallowed in the Senate today, the onus is back on the Government to provide certainty and security to anxious patients who are booked for private cataract surgery from 1 November onwards.

AMA President, Dr Andrew Pesce, said the Government had poorly managed its decision to halve the Medicare rebate for cataract surgery from the very start, and we now have a situation where needy patients are in doubt about an important procedure that will either save or significantly improve their sight.

"The Government must ensure the *Health Insurance Amendment (Revival of Table Items) Bill 2009* is debated in the House of Representatives before the Parliament rises tomorrow – and it must support the Bill.

"The Bill was passed in the Senate earlier today.

"We need certainty and security for the patients who are booked for private cataract surgery in the coming weeks.

"Those patients will be looking to the Government to do the right thing by them and pass this Bill."

---

28 October 2009

CONTACT: John Flannery 02 6270 5477 / 0419 494 761
Peter Jean 02 6270 5464 / 0427 209 753