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**CATARACT REBATE AGREEMENT CONFIRMS IMPORTANCE OF  
CLINICAL INPUT TO HEALTH DECISION-MAKING**

AMA President, Dr Andrew Pesce, today congratulated the Government and the Australian Society of Ophthalmologists on a mutually satisfactory outcome from their negotiations over changes to the Medicare rebate for cataract surgery.

Dr Pesce said that today's resolution was, above all, a win for patients and a great relief for the thousands of people around the country who had faced uncertainty over their sight-saving operations.

"The successful outcome over this issue confirms the AMA view that there must be expert clinical input at the beginning of the process of making changes to Medicare rebates, not after the event," Dr Pesce said.

"It is common sense to talk to the doctors who perform the procedures every day before making policies that affect how they care for their patients.

"To her credit, Health Minister Roxon worked closely with the ophthalmologists to reach an agreement.

"We welcome the new \$5 million outreach fund for cataract treatment in rural and Indigenous communities.

"The AMA urges the Senate to accept these changes so the benefits can flow to patients as early as possible," Dr Pesce said.

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