



Somlyay launches new inquiry into Health Funding

Chairman of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing, Alex Somlyay, today announced a new parliamentary inquiry into the complex arrangements currently in place for health funding.

Mr Somlyay said that the Committee will examine how the Australian government can improve the efficient and effective delivery of high quality health care to all Australians.

“Health funding is a source of confusion and unnecessary complexity and it affects health care outcomes across all State and Territory lines”, Mr Somlyay said.

“It is worth noting that Australia’s health system is among the best in the world. Our life expectancy is ranked fifth in the world, but ever-increasing pressures in funding and expectations are causing the system to buckle.”

Mr Somlyay said that the Committee will explore funding issues as well as looking at how health costs have increased and why.

“The Commonwealth spends \$41 billion a year on health and ageing and over the past 18 months we have committed an extra \$11 billion to health spending to improve things like bulk-billing rates, nursing home standards and access to private health insurance,” Mr Somlyay said.

“In spite of these improvements, the public perception is that the health system is not providing what Australians need and we need to look at why that is.”

The Committee invites public submissions on:

How the Australian government can improve the efficient and effective delivery of high quality health care to all Australians with particular reference to:

- the roles and responsibilities of the different levels of government for health services;
- funding arrangements between the governments, particularly for hospitals;
- accountability to the Australian community for health service delivery; and
- ensuring a strong private health sector and making health insurance a still more attractive option to those who are afford it.

For media interview with the Chairman: Please contact the Committee Secretary on **02 6277 4579** or **0421 051 837**.

For a copy of the terms of reference and further information on making a submission: contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4145 or email haa.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/haa

