



RACP
Specialists. Together
EDUCATE ADVOCATE INNOVATE

2026 VICTORIAN ELECTION STATEMENT



About The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP)

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) represents over 34,400 medical specialists and trainee specialists across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

Our members work across a broad range of medical specialties including general medicine, paediatrics and child health, geriatric medicine, cardiology, neurology, oncology, respiratory medicine, palliative medicine, public health medicine, infectious diseases medicine, sexual health medicine, rehabilitation medicine, addiction medicine, occupational and environmental medicine, and more.

The RACP is committed to medical excellence and to developing health policies that improve the wellbeing of patients, the medical profession and the community, and contribute to better health outcomes and a sustainable healthcare system.



The RACP acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians and Elders – past, present and emerging – of the lands and waters on which RACP members and staff live, learn and work in Australia.

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Every Victorian deserves timely access to specialist care, no matter where they live, their personal circumstances, or the type of care they need.

This requires a strong, well-resourced and well-supported physician workforce, equal access to care, and a sustainable healthcare system.

Victoria's challenge

Victoria's healthcare system is under sustained pressure. Our physicians and trainees see the consequences every day:

- workforce shortages and maldistribution,
- long waitlists for specialist appointments,
- growing inequity for communities living in regional and rural areas,
- rising healthcare needs and clinical and non-clinical workloads, and
- growing burnout across the profession.

Physicians and trainees are essential to caring for Victorians with complex, chronic and acute illnesses. Ensuring they are appropriately distributed across the state and supported by high-quality training is critical to delivering timely, equitable and world-class specialist care to all Victorians.

Ahead of the 2026 Victorian election, the RACP and its Victorian Committee call on all parties to commit to practical reforms that strengthen medical specialist care across the state, especially in regional and rural areas.

The RACP is committed to working with the incoming Victorian Government to enable physicians and trainees to meet the health needs of the community, and improve health outcomes for all Victorians, now and into the future.

The RACP's recommendations for Victoria



1. Strengthen the healthcare workforce: partner with the RACP on access to specialist care

The RACP wants to work with the incoming government to:

- Improve access to timely medical specialist care by investing in public inpatient and outpatient medical specialist services, while strengthening coordination between public and private health care to reduce waiting times and support equitable access for all Victorians.
- Invest in community-based health care models to reduce inpatient hospital workload and pressure on hospital services.
- Support physician-led [collaborative models of care](#) between physicians, general practitioners and allied health professionals, drawing on specialist expertise across public and private healthcare settings, to improve care coordination and timely access to specialist care and ensure models are designed to meet the needs of underserved communities across Victoria.
 - This includes management of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and [models](#) for other complex conditions.
- Commit to proactive data-informed investment in specialty physician workforce planning, to help address workforce maldistribution and unmet community need, and ensure care can be delivered when it is needed and as close to home as possible.



2. Strengthen the rural and regional healthcare workforce: build and support a sustainable, regionally distributed physician workforce

The RACP wants to work with the incoming government to:

- Develop flexible attraction-and-retention strategies for regional and rural areas, including practical supports, such as access to childcare, rental affordability measures and relocation assistance, to support physicians and trainees to relocate and remain in regional and rural areas long term.
- Invest in specialist generalism, virtual care and community-based services closer to home, including community-based physician-led models of chronic disease care and outreach clinics where permanent staffing is not feasible.

- These services should complement and strengthen the local workforce, while improving connections between regional healthcare services and tertiary hospitals.
- Build a sustainable local trainee workforce pipeline by:
 1. Funding and supporting end-to-end training pathways and regional training networks in regional and rural areas; and
 2. Increasing physician training positions and access to diverse clinical rotations that prepare trainees for rural practice.
- Invest in digital infrastructure, including telehealth and interoperable electronic medical records, to strengthen connectivity and improve timely access to medical specialist care and expertise for regional and rural communities.



3. Improve healthcare workforce experience, protect patients and strengthen healthcare system performance: support physician wellbeing and prevent burnout

The RACP wants to work with the incoming government to:

- Strengthen workplace provisions for physicians and trainees, including flexible training, safer work hours, and support to take leave entitlements.
 - These measures will help to reduce burnout, support physician and trainee wellbeing, protect patient safety and improve the quality and sustainability of health care for Victorian communities.
- Ensure adequate time for trainees and physicians, free from clinical duties, for learning, supervision, research and professional development, supported by sufficient staffing to safeguard healthcare service delivery and patient care, and maintain high-quality training.
- Address daily practice challenges, including increasing administrative and operational support, to allow physicians and trainees to spend more time providing health care for patients.
- Appoint Chief Medical Wellness Officers within Local Health Service Networks and hospitals to lead, implement and monitor initiatives that improve healthcare worker wellbeing, reduce burnout and strengthen workplace culture.

Contact

For more information or to arrange a discussion, please contact Jessica Falvey, Policy and Advocacy Officer, via email to the RACP Policy and Advocacy unit at policy@racp.edu.au.