

SA doctors united for a stronger health system

SA State Election 2026 Priorities

December 2025

Doctors across South Australia are united in calling for health to be front and centre this election.

We're urging all parties to commit to three clear priorities that will help strengthen care for our communities: identify the gaps in our health system through a statewide analysis, grow and support the medical workforce, and remove unnecessary barriers so doctors can work where they're needed.

This is about ensuring every South Australian can get safe, timely care, no matter where they live.

1. Map South Australia's healthcare gaps

Commit to a comprehensive, statewide health needs and service gap analysis which identifies where South Australians are missing out on essential care, and where investment is most needed to improve health outcomes for communities across the state.

South Australia does not currently have a single, contemporary map of unmet health needs, service gaps, and workforce pressures across metropolitan, regional, rural and remote communities. This makes it harder to ensure the system can meet people's needs now and into the future as the state's population grows and changes.

A rigorous, data-driven needs and service gap analysis would:

- Identify where people face the biggest barriers to timely, safe care.
- Pinpoint system pressure points driving delays and poorer outcomes.
- Highlight ways to improve continuity of care across the patient journey, including improved systems and communication between specialties and the public/private sector.
- Help close the health gap and poorer outcomes faced by rural, regional and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Provide a shared evidence base to guide investment and improve equitable access to care.

2. Grow a sustainable medical workforce

Commit to a coordinated, statewide approach to medical workforce planning which ensures training, recruitment and retention are driven by the health needs of South Australian communities.

Alongside a comprehensive gap analysis, a statewide workforce strategy, developed in partnership with medical colleges and other key stakeholders, is essential to ensure that people can access high quality, fully staffed health services anywhere in South Australia, and that we have a sustainable longterm workforce solution.

A coordinated statewide workforce plan would:

- Help address the ongoing problem of health services unable to fill roles due to workforce shortages, leaving gaps where clinicians are needed most and directly affecting patients' access to timely, safe care
- Align South Australia with national workforce planning initiatives while addressing the state's unique geographic and distribution challenges.
- Identify and address ongoing challenges to the growth and sustainability of rural medical workforces.
- Create a shared, statewide workforce framework to guide investment and deliver a consistent, strategic approach across both SA Health as an employer and medical colleges as training providers of specialist doctors.

3. Remove unnecessary barriers

Commit to a single, statewide process to recognise doctors' credentials across hospitals and health services, reducing duplication and supporting flexible workforce solutions.

Right now, doctors must repeat time-consuming credentialling processes for every hospital and health service where they work. This limits flexibility, delays staffing solutions, and contributes to workforce gaps, particularly when services are already under pressure.

A single, consistent approval system would:

- Reduce barriers, duplication and administrative burden to supplement staff shortages.
- Improve flexibility to fill workforce gaps.
- Support the rapid mobilisation of staff to support areas in need.
- Support safer staffing levels across hospitals.
- Ensure central and consistent coordination of relevant workforce and payroll processes.