



Election Policies
Federal Election 2010
The Value of Medical Technology

In support of its advocacy on the valuable role that medical technology plays in the Australian healthcare system, the Medical Technology Association of Australia puts forward the following seven election policies for consideration and adoption.

1. Ensuring a sustainable private health system in Australia

- Choice of doctor, choice of treatment, choice of technology – principles underpinning value of private health insurance (PHI)
- PHI restricting access to appropriate technologies through unsustainable reimbursement practices which acts as a disincentive to uptake of PHI – access decisions should be driven by cost-effectiveness and clinical effectiveness, not capping
- Redesign of system to enable greater use of private hospitals and day facilities and professional teams to address areas of chronic need in public system, with shared cost/benefit outcomes

2. Flexible assessment and funding arrangements to admit new technologies

- Completion of implementation of recommendations of HTA Review with emphasis on evidence base, assessment that is fit for purpose, transparent and accountable processes, retention of 'gap' at least pending 3 year review
- Expansion of Prostheses List to fund emerging and beneficial technologies that do not meet criteria for listing as prostheses. Examples include electro physiology (EP) catheters, continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) devices, Meniett devices, incision management systems, FFR devices for complex coronary lesion assessment
- Development of a public funding model for complex technologies on basis of cost-effective benefits to patients and health system

3. Essential Care List scheme

- Centralised national scheme to enable subsidized access by patients to single-use consumable medical devices and products in community setting high technology wound care products for long term complex wounds, compression garments for lymphoedema, consumables for diabetes patients
- Healthcare professional assessment of patient to determine need and most appropriate product
- Products grouped with benchmark subsidy and premium for superior clinical outcomes, based on assessment of clinical effectiveness
- Amalgamation of Commonwealth and State schemes to provide greater clarity for patients and reduction in administrative expenses

Medical Technology for a Healthier Australia

4. Public health reforms

- Activity-based funding model must be sufficiently flexible to enable substitution of newer technologies where there is evidence of improved cost-effectiveness and/or clinical effectiveness
- Procurement processes should deliver efficient pricing and manage supply chain efficiencies and not be used as method for restricting range of available products
- Patients entitled to access appropriate technologies with technology selection driven by State health technology assessment processes, aligned with Commonwealth HTA, rather than cost capping
- Reformed procurement processes are needed with consistent tender requirements and contract provisions across all States and Territories, designed for procurement of medical technology
- Development of nationally consistent safety and quality standards

5. Arrangements to support home-based care

- Expansion of MBS funding codes to encourage remote diagnosis, monitoring and home-based medical consultations
- Provide incentives for doctors who support patients by appropriate remote management
- Support policies which enable patients to remain in their own homes rather than require admission to hospital or residential home
- Recognize the cost-effective value of technology in providing support to patients and doctors outside the hospital setting

6. Sharps injuries (including needlestick prevention) in the healthcare workplace

- Adoption of consistent national standards for infection control including mandatory use of safety engineered medical devices to provide protection for healthcare workers from the risk of occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens
- Mandatory national reporting of all needlestick and sharps injuries occurring in both public and private healthcare workplaces
- Improved education and training on the risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens from needlestick and sharps injuries, how to prevent injuries, reporting requirements and post exposure management for injured healthcare workers
- Inclusion of healthcare employee safety in relevant standards as part of audits for hospital accreditation

7. Life sciences industry development

- Creation of policies to support robust life sciences sector with identification of contribution to Australian economy
- Support for Australian-based medical technology manufacturing including re-skilling and transfer of workers from other high skilled manufacturing sectors
- Encouragement of clinical trials in Australia (including streamlining current impediments such as multi-site ethics requirements), active creation of opportunities to undertake clinical trials (by making clinicians available to participate) and recognition of the value that clinical trials deliver to the economy.