



Australian Society of Ophthalmologists

MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Society of Ophthalmologists Incorporated ABN 29 454 001 424

Queensland Health loses sight of the big picture

Thursday 17 November 2011

PUBLIC hospital patients had been abandoned by Queensland Health bureaucrats more concerned with budgets than quality medical outcomes, the Australian Society of Ophthalmologists said today.

Australian Society of Ophthalmologists president Dr Brad Horsburgh said it was totally unacceptable that hospitals are now so under resourced that patients are unable to obtain an outpatient appointment.

“Medicare was never intended for state bureaucrats to pick and choose who will and who won’t be given treatment,” Dr Horsburgh said.

“Because a patient’s eye condition may have been described as ‘non-urgent’ does not mean it should not be treated.”

“Doctors refer patients to specialists because they are suffering from conditions which require further evaluation, diagnosis and treatment.”

“For bureaucrats to then respond that they are ‘unable’ to provide that appointment beggars belief when the fundamental principle of Medicare was to provide equal access to quality medical care to all Australians.”

Dr Horsburgh said untreated eye complaints could exacerbate other health conditions and impinge on patients’ quality of life.

“It is up to medical doctors and specialists to make decisions on medical treatment and care after an appropriate consultation with a patient.

“These are not decisions to be made remotely, possibly by bureaucrats who do not have access to the total medical case history.

“For Brisbane’s largest hospital to be denying ophthalmological appointments to properly referred patients is a sign of a medical system in deep crisis. Indeed this crisis is of such importance that I will raise it at the Royal Australian and New Zealand College’s Annual Scientific Congress in Canberra this weekend.”

Continue page 2....

All correspondence: PO Box 1300 Spring Hill Qld 4004

President: Dr Brad Horsburgh Ph: 07 3831 3004 / Fax: 07 3831 3005



Australian Society of Ophthalmologists

MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Society of Ophthalmologists Incorporated ABN 29 454 001 424

Continued from page 1...

“The ASO is ready to negotiate with Ministers Roxon and Wilson to help resolve this appalling state of affairs. It cannot be allowed to continue.

“Queenslanders are entitled to and deserve quality health outcomes, not to be turned away by hard hearted bureaucrats.”

Media contact:

Dr. Brad Horsburgh President ASO: 0417 790 313

Ross Eastgate, ASO Media Advisor: 0419 673 500

All correspondence: PO Box 1300 Spring Hill Qld 4004

President: Dr Brad Horsburgh Ph: 07 3831 3004 / Fax: 07 3831 3005