



Australian Health Care Reform Alliance

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Where Ross Gittins gets it right on health reform



AHCRA welcomed the recent [editorial](#) from economics editor of the Sydney Morning Herald, Ross Gittins, calling for health system reform.

AHCRA agrees with Gittins' view that 'our present badly organised system is driven mainly by doctors' – particularly specialists' - desire to protect and increase their incomes, whichever side of politics is in office, federal or state, spends most of its time between elections trying to hold back the growth in health spending.'

This is why AHCRA is calling for some major reforms of our health system to reduce waste, increase efficiency and deliver services where they are most needed.

As Gittins points out, election campaigns can often result in a competition to see who can spend the most on pills and hospitals. Of course medicines and hospital services are important but they are not the only or even most important parts of our health 'system'.

If we really want to improve the performance of our health system, we need to focus more on doing things differently – increasing the focus on prevention, primary health care and chronic disease management. We need workforce reform to ensure all providers can work to their full scope of practice and a funding system that supports quality care and the coordination and management of people complex conditions.

In short, we need a 'person centred' rather than a 'provider centred' health system. However, as Gittins points out, an election campaign is not always the best environment for delivering these reforms.

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