

**Ambulance Employees Association of South Australia**

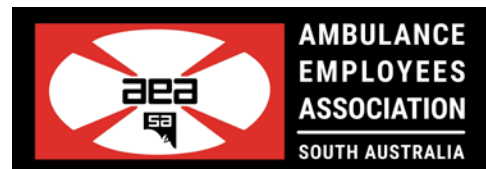
13 Hindmarsh Place, HINDMARSH SA 5007

Telephone: (08) 8340 3511

Fax: (08) 8340 2411

Email: [info@aea.com.au](mailto:info@aea.com.au)

ABN: 63 984 132 030



**27 August 2025**

Hon. Chris Picton MP  
Minister for Health and Wellbeing  
Citi Centre Building  
11 Hindmarsh Square  
ADELAIDE SA 500

Dear Chris,

**MOUNT GAMBIER - COMMUNITY ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE, AMBULANCE RAMPING**

The AEA writes to voice its concern regarding the community's access to healthcare and the broader health system impacts of inadequate health resourcing in Mount Gambier.

In June 2025, Mount Gambier's Urgent Care Clinic closed, leaving residents with no option for accessing healthcare other than attending the hospital Emergency Department or waiting to get into their general practitioner - an outdated and deficient model of care.

Since this time, things have only gotten worse. The AEA understands that presently no general practice clinics in Mount Gambier are taking on new patients.

Inevitably, our members report that this has resulted in increased ambulance callouts and an increase in presentations to the Mount Gambier Hospital ED.

AEA members have reported increased ramping and delays to transfer of care, including of patients who would usually be seen more quickly for their safety, such as those experiencing chest pain.

AEA members have also reported attending patients whose condition has worsened after discharge from hospital, having been unable to access their GP for follow up or outpatient services.

The AEA is concerned that without timely access to primary care, patients will get sicker before they can get help, resulting in worse patient outcomes and even further strain on a struggling health system.

This kind of problem will get worse if it's not promptly addressed.

We understand the Government will soon open six new beds in Mount Gambier Hospital ED. We are supportive of this additional capacity, but it seems increasingly likely these beds will be quickly overcome with the high numbers of patients needing access to health services.

Our regional communities deserve access to quality healthcare that meets their needs. We fear that if the situation in Mount Gambier is left any longer without meaningful intervention, it's only a matter of time before there are poorer patient outcomes and insurmountable long-term repercussions for the region.

We request, as a matter of urgency, your advocacy to the federal Government for funding for new alternative care and primary care facilities in Mount Gambier, or that the state Government step in itself to provide these critical services.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Ekkelboom  
**General Secretary**  
Ambulance Employees Association