



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) INC**

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Doctors' resignations: AMA(SA) offers to mediate

AMA(SA) President Dr Peter Ford today called on the government to take action to resolve the dispute with public hospital doctors, and offered the AMA(SA) as a mediator to assist all sides in the dispute to achieve an outcome.

'Differing settlements for differing groups of doctors in the lead-up to the last election created inequities that were always going to create problems down the track,' said Dr Ford.

'The government commissioned the Reid / McKay Report to find answers to the problem of inequities in the system – but kept the report from the public gaze when the recommendations proved too challenging to implement.

'Many hospital doctors gave up their time to be interviewed for that report, so the government's failure to release it has regrettably burned a lot of goodwill with many of them.

'Add to that eight months of tortuous negotiations – and a public hospital system under more and more pressure – and it is not surprising that public hospital doctors are disillusioned.

'The resignations of Emergency Department doctors, surgeons and anaesthetists puts our public hospitals in a very grave situation. Even the best contingency plans will be unsustainable for any prolonged period.

'There really are no alternatives – the government must move and move quickly to find common ground with public hospital doctors and find a settlement to this dispute.

'The AMA(SA) is not directly involved in the negotiations, which are being run by the salaried doctors' union, SASMOA, but has many members who are affected by them. In the interests of everyone concerned, we formally offer to mediate between SASMOA, the government and the doctors, to develop a satisfactory outcome, if all parties wish this,' said Dr Ford.

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