



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
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AMA(SA) launches 'Youth Friendly Doctor' Program

An important new program which aims to improve discussion between doctors and teenagers on health issues was jointly launched in Adelaide today by AMA(SA) President Dr Peter Ford, Federal AMA President Dr Rosanna Capolingua and SA Health Minister John Hill.

The Youth Friendly Doctor program will up-skill general practitioners in a range of contemporary adolescent health issues, and offer a core team of Youth Friendly Doctors to conduct workshops with teenagers in high schools.

AMA president Dr Rosanna Capolingua said she was delighted to be in Adelaide for the launch, having had extensive experience of the program in Western Australia, where she is the medical director of their program.

'I am really pleased to be in Adelaide for the launch of this program, as this is very close to my heart', said Dr Capolingua.

'Young people face a range of issues, and it is important that they feel confident that they can go to see a GP to be given credible, confidential advice and help with their problems. The Youth Friendly Doctor program gives doctors the information they need to be abreast of contemporary issues, understand how to communicate with young people, and understand their ethical and legal obligations and responsibility when looking after a young person.

'Young people can feel confident and safe when seeing a doctor. They can talk to their doctor about things that they would not talk to their parents, carers, teachers or peers about.

Dr Ford said that parents, educators and others often face difficulties when protecting the well-being of young people. This program will help doctors to increase communication skills and build relationships with young people to overcome these struggles'.

Minister Hill said that the Department of Health is pleased to be funding this initiative, as he sees a great capacity for the Youth Friendly Doctor program to make a real difference to adolescent health and wellbeing.

Once doctors have been accredited as a 'Youth Friendly Doctor' they will be able to place their contact details on an AMA(SA) Youth Friendly Doctor web-based register being developed.

For further information regarding the Youth Friendly Doctor Program, please contact Maria French, Program Coordinator at the AMA(SA) on (08) 8267 4355.
SA Health has contributed funds towards this Program.