

**AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (SA) Inc**

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**EMBARGOED UNTIL  
00:01 AM ACST, FRIDAY 6 MAY 2011**

**AMA(SA): New President Elected**

At the AMA(SA)'s Annual General Meeting on 5 May 2011, Specialist Intensivist Dr Peter Sharley was elected president of the AMA(SA) for the coming year.

Dr Sharley, who has served the AMA(SA) as Vice-President and Honorary Treasurer, was elected unopposed.

Dr Sharley gained his medical degree from the University of Adelaide and completed a Diploma in Obstetrics and terms in Rural General Practice. He completed specialist training in Anaesthesia and later in Intensive Care Medicine, commencing as a Specialist at the Royal Adelaide Hospital in 1993. He is currently Deputy Director of the RAH Intensive Care Unit.

Dr Sharley acknowledged the hard work and dedication of his predecessor, Dr Andrew Lavender, who remains a member of the AMA's Federal Council and State Council.

Peter Sharley has been a strong advocate for medical services in the rural sector and served on the Country Health Taskforce in 2008. He was a previous Director of the RAH Critical Care Retrieval Service and will continue to advocate strongly for patients and their doctors particularly on rural health issues.

While acknowledging that the current economic climate will put some constraints on spending in the upcoming state budget, he emphasised that "We cannot afford to let down our public hospital system, which has gone under-funded for too long". Patients waiting times for Emergency and Elective Surgery in SA in public hospitals are still at unacceptable levels. Insufficient bed numbers in public hospitals and timely access to a General Practitioner for large portions of the SA Public continue to be core issues.

"It is really vital that in facing these challenges, governments and health decision-makers consult with those actually on the ground, delivering services. Too often, decisions in health are not clinically informed – which is bad for patients and the system. The first and last word should be about what is best for patients. "It is what we are all working for, and clinical leadership with responsibility and accountability is the key to achieving excellent patient care," he stated.

While Dr Sharley takes up his duties immediately, retiring president Dr Andrew Lavender will ceremonially hand over the reins to Dr Sharley at the AMA(SA)'s Gala Dinner on 21 May. Dr David Walsh, Breast Surgeon and Senior Lecturer in Breast Endocrine Surgery at the University of Adelaide, was elected unopposed to the role of AMA(SA) Vice-President.

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**5 May 2011**

**Contact:** Dr Peter Sharley on (08) 8361 0109 or after-hours on (08) 8361 0100