



# **Jillian Skinner MP**

## **Minister for Health**

## **Minister for Medical Research**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Wednesday 18 February 2015

#### **NSW GOVERNMENT STRENGTHENS CLINICIAN ENGAGEMENT**

In a first for NSW, Health Minister Jillian Skinner has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Australian Medical Association NSW (AMA) and the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation NSW (ASMOF) to strengthen engagement with clinicians in the development of health policy.

Mrs Skinner was joined by AMA (NSW) President Dr Saxon Smith and ASMOF (NSW) President Dr Tony Sara to sign the MOU at an event at AMA House.

"The NSW Government is committed to putting patients first, which is why we have strived for improved engagement with clinicians to deliver enhanced patient outcomes," Mrs Skinner said.

"I'm incredibly proud of the achievements we have made in devolving decision-making in the health portfolio to local experts and clinician support has been integral to this process.

"From our hospital redevelopments to the development of policy in areas such as palliative care, clinician engagement is vital to ensure we get it right.

"I would like to see this rapport continue and I thank both the AMA and ASMOF for joining me to recognise this agreement of support.

"I have personally committed to continuing devolution, localism, transparency and accountability as the basis for an effective, patient-centred public health system.

"This MOU will focus on the need for feedback and evaluation as part of enhancing the health system. We want to foster this two-way communication to better the care we provide and improve workplace culture."

Dr Smith said the MOU represented a new era of communication between senior clinicians and management.

"This memorandum of understanding helps embed the importance of effective communication and collaboration between hospital management and senior medical staff," Dr Smith said.

"International evidence shows that this is critical to delivering best patient care."

Dr Sara said ASMOF (NSW) and AMA (NSW) will conduct regular surveys of their senior medical members to gauge their perceptions as a group and provide that feedback to the NSW Ministry of Health to ensure better relationships between senior managers and their clinician colleagues.

“By partnering with senior clinicians to seek their feedback on their workplaces and the broader health system, we can modify practices and introduce better models of care,” Dr Sara said.

“I thank the Minister for her commitment to improving relations at all levels of the health system for the benefit of patients and NSW Health staff.”

Other commitments of the MOU include:

- Embedding of the CORE values of collaboration, openness, respect and empowerment across NSW Health;
- One or more executive clinical directors being appointed in each Local Health District (LHD) and Specialty Network to advise on medical matters and improve links between management and medical clinicians;
- Local doctors as members of LHD and Network boards;
- A co-ordinated process through Medical Staff Councils for providing nominations for LHD board membership to the Minister of Health;
- Opportunities for Medical Staff Council representatives to attend LHD meetings as observers;
- The strengthening of clinical councils and the inclusion of the Medical Staff Council Chair on LHD and facility clinical councils;
- Supporting participation of doctors-in-training on facility clinical councils