

Australian Medical Association (NSW) Limited



THE VOICE OF THE PROFESSION  
**AMA Action**

Health news in the spotlight  
**Thursday 14 February 2008**

**In the news:**

- **AMA (NSW) calls for better infection control in hospitals**
- **Protect children with a smoke-free environment, AMA (NSW) says**
- **AMA (NSW) welcomes new CEO**

**AMA Supports 'Stolen Generations' Apology**

The AMA supported this week's apology from the Federal Parliament to the 'Stolen Generations' of Indigenous Australians.

AMA President, Dr Rosanna Capolingua, said the good intentions and the symbolism of the apology would have a significant positive impact on the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Australians and the nation as a whole.

"The apology will be the catalyst for a new era of cooperation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. It is important that we use the symbolism of the apology to create a new reality of better health and better quality of life for Indigenous Australians," Dr Capolingua said.

"We must close the 17-year life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. True reconciliation will improve the health of the nation." Dr Capolingua said.

**AMA (NSW) calls for better infection control in hospitals**

AMA (NSW) has urged NSW Health to adopt international best practice on infection control in NSW hospitals and to publish comparative data on infection rates.

A national study of golden staph infection has found that patients in NSW and ACT are 25 per cent more likely to have a life-threatening drug-resistant version of the bug. Sydney patients are more likely to contract lethal infections than elsewhere in Australia, but the State government said publishing hospital-by-hospital results would be counterproductive.

“AMA (NSW) supports the call by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons to adopt search and destroy tactics, and to publish the infection rates of individual hospitals,” said AMA (NSW) President Dr Andrew Keegan.

“AMA (NSW) is in favour of open and transparent reporting, based on sound methods. Individual hospitals, their administration and clinicians must collectively be responsible for infection control. A low rate of hospital acquired infections is simply something that all hospitals should aspire to.

“Reporting and analysis need to be followed by funding and infection reduction programs. Our hospitals do not need more reports and recommendations which are not acted on,” Dr Keegan said.

### **Protect children with a smoke-free environment says AMA (NSW)**

On World Cancer Day (4 February), AMA (NSW) President Dr Andrew Keegan urged smokers to consider the long-term health consequences of smoking and the effect of second-hand (passive) smoking especially on children.

“AMA (NSW) has continued to lobby for smoke free legislation in public areas. Last year, AMA (NSW) supported the smoking ban in NSW pubs and clubs and joined leading health groups to encourage local councils to ban smoking in outdoor areas under their control, such as play grounds, sports fields and outdoor dining areas,” said AMA (NSW) President Dr Andrew Keegan.

“AMA (NSW) is heartened by the decline in smoking rates in Australia but we need to take more steps to ensure that children are not exposed to passive smoking which may lead to damaging health consequences and an unhealthy lifestyle.” Dr Keegan said.

### **AMA (NSW) welcomes new CEO**

AMA (NSW) has welcomed the appointment of Ms Fiona Davies to the position of Chief Executive Officer of AMA (NSW). Ms Davies (33) started her career with AMA (NSW) in 1998, and most recently held the position of Director, Workplace Relations and Human Resources.

“I am proud to be able to continue my association with the medical profession and am looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead,” Ms Davies said.

Ms Davies believes important medico political issues facing the profession are the state of the public hospital system and the independence of medical practitioners.

“As a working parent, I am also aware of the individual challenges faced by many of our members in combining work life balance,” Ms Davies said.

“My aim is to ensure that AMA (NSW) remains a strong voice promoting improved health care for patients in NSW and the interests and well being of the medical profession,” Ms Davies said.

## **Announcements**

**Labor Industrial Relations Policy Overview:** An overview of Labor’s IR policy is now available online. For further queries, please contact AMA (NSW) on 9439 8822. [http://www.nswama.com.au/media/labor\\_industrial\\_relations\\_policy.pdf](http://www.nswama.com.au/media/labor_industrial_relations_policy.pdf).

**The Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Service in NSW** will be holding **public forums** in Sydney in February, March and April, to be chaired by the Commissioner, the Hon James Wood, AO, QC. Regional forums will be held in March April and May. Representatives of relevant organizations and interested members of the public are invited to attend. For details see the Commission’s web site at [www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpsinquiry](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/cpsinquiry).

### **AMA (NSW) upcoming seminars:**

**AMA (NSW) Workplace Relations and Medico-Legal Issues Seminar-** Protect your practice against expensive management pitfalls, 7-8 June at Quay West Suites, Sydney. Early bird Registration \$440. Contact AMA (NSW) Workplace Relations Division on 9439 8822 or [industrial@nswama.com.au](mailto:industrial@nswama.com.au)

**Starting in Private Practice Workshop-** Designed for registrars who are finishing college training and are about to or have just entered private practice, 5 April 2008. FREE for AMA members and non members. Contact Kimberley on 9438 3760 or email [Kimberley@nswama.com.au](mailto:Kimberley@nswama.com.au)

**UNE Partnerships and AMA (NSW) present 2008 workshops-** for health care practices in Sydney including Certificate IV in Practice Management and Diploma of Practice Management (Prerequisite Cert IV). Contact 1800 288 622.

**Play golf with a professional at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Classic**, hosted by the AMA (NSW) Charitable Foundation. The Charity Classic will be played at Terrey Hills Country Club on Thursday 21 February, with a 1pm shotgun start. For more details contact Doreen Kavic on 9439 8822 or email [Doreen@nswama.com.au](mailto:Doreen@nswama.com.au)

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