



AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) INC.
ABN 91 028 693 268

2021 LHN CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS RESET

MEMBER UPDATE No. 1

12 February 2021

We welcome you and your colleagues to the first issue of our Update about discussions to reach a 2021 GP contract agreement with the Local Health Networks (LHNs), through the Department for Health and Wellbeing's Rural Support Services (RSS).

From this point, we will regularly inform you of progress towards an agreement.

Please be assured that we are aware of and understand the evolving crises associated with problems in our rural doctors' relationships with LHNs, your concerns about attracting and retaining a new generation of younger doctors, and all the difficulties resulting from a heavy reliance on locums in several rural towns.

We are also aware of the legitimate frustrations about the lack of RSS dialogue about the late November 2020 expiry of the existing contract – and about the manner of discussions between AMA(SA)/RDASA negotiators and RSS regarding the new contract.

The AMA(SA) and RDASA have decided that, in 2021, we need a RESET.

We have made important progress. Since mid-January 2021, there have been two lengthy meetings with RSS leadership. In December, the AMA discussed with Health Minister Stephen Wade to RESET the process.

We now have an experienced professional negotiator from Federal AMA - but working for us, and you - to guide the process and provide advice.

All of this has now been made clear to RSS. RSS has agreed to do things differently to reach a successful conclusion to negotiations.

As a result, we now have confidence that progress will be possible, because the correct foundation has been created. This is the necessary basis for us to begin professionally managed and comprehensive discussions on the terms and conditions for your new contract.

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Over the next few weeks, a real effort will be made to ensure RSS has no doubt about the contractual terms and conditions we need, and the actions that RSS must commit to so that any 2021 contract agreement:

- respects your contribution through fair remuneration
- enhances your influence and engagement with LHNs
- creates genuine pathways towards workforce sustainability and the maintenance of high-quality GP services in rural hospitals.

We hope to be able to re-start formal contract discussions around mid-March. We will confirm this as soon as possible.

Please feel free to distribute this Update to interested colleagues and throughout your networks. The more everyone is informed, the stronger our mandate to achieve success.

If you are not a member, please consider joining, by visiting the RDASA and AMA(SA) websites.

To provide comment or feedback, or for more information about the contract negotiations, please contact:

- RDASA: Dr Peter Rischbieth (Peter.Rischbieth@bridgeclinic.com.au) or Dr Scott Lewis (drscott@internode.on.net)
- AMA(SA): Dr Chris Moy (chrismoy@optusnet.com.au or president@amasa.org.au) or Dr Samantha Mead (CEO@amasa.org.au).

We look forward to being able to provide more information about negotiations in the near future.

Yours sincerely



Dr Chris Moy
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President



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