

2023 Year in Review – What has been occupying our time at AMA (NSW)?

Payroll Tax

One of the many issues AMA (NSW) tackled in 2023 was the issue of payroll tax, a matter on which the AMA has been campaigning since 2018. After the success of the [“Your Quality Care Taxed”](#) campaign, another state-wide [campaign](#) was launched in February this year encouraging patients to help GPs fight what was described as “a potentially devastating tax”. The pressure [continued](#) in the lead up to the state election with repeated warnings of the dangers of payroll tax both to those in the city and the [regions](#) and renewed calls for an exemption. After a Court of Appeals decision in the case of Thomas and Naaz Pty Ltd AMA (NSW) [warned](#) that general practices were put at greater risk of being liable for payroll tax.

In early August NSW State Revenue published rulings confirming for the first time that many independent GPs working in medical centres would be subject to payroll tax. AMA (NSW)’s response was reported [widely](#).

AMA (NSW) joined other associations to successfully secure a yearlong amnesty to allow further consultation. A very successful meeting was held with the finance minister with whom further talks are expected in 2024.

Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding (SCOI)

The Minns government formally announced the [SCOI](#) in September, with sweeping terms of reference, sparking a [swift response](#) from [AMA \(NSW\)](#). After Treasurer Daniel Mookhey misspoke, conflating the incomes of locums and VMOs, AMA (NSW) went on a [media offensive](#), in an attempt to clarify the situation in a [series](#) of [articles](#). Concerned for the future employment conditions of VMOs, the terms and conditions of VMO arrangements were the subject of AMA (NSW)’s first submission to the SCOI which you can read [here](#). As the inquiry continues AMA (NSW) will have the opportunity to give evidence on.

- The rights of consultants to accept private patients under their care in public hospitals.
- The need for collaboration between Colleges & LHDs to ensure the provision of high-quality training.

- Whether greater reliance on primary care may reduce pressure on resources and staff in public hospitals and
- Engagement & remuneration of locums.

Other Inquiries – State and Federal

AMA (NSW) was kept very busy compiling submissions and preparing for hearings on a number of subjects. Here are some of the matters which were addressed.

The NSW Upper House Select Committee on Birth Trauma

[Click here for AMA \(NSW\)'s submission](#)

You can see AMA (NSW) Vice President Dr Kathryn Austin and AMA (NSW) CEO Fiona Davies giving evidence [here](#).

You can read other submissions [here](#).

The Federal Community Affairs Legislation Committee 01/11/2023 – Public Health (Tobacco & Other Products) Bill 2023

AMA (NSW) President Dr Michael Bonning gave evidence in his capacity as chair of the AMA's Public Health Committee.

You can read a transcript by clicking [here](#).

And watch him giving evidence [here](#).

The AMA [welcomed the announcement](#) of tougher vaping laws in [late November](#).

The NSW Legislative Assembly Committee on Law & Safety (E-cigarette regulation and compliance in New South Wales)

Here is a link to the [inquiry](#).

And [here](#) is the submission by AMA (NSW).

The NSW Select Committee on Remote, Rural & Regional Health

Following on from the Committee's May 2022 recommendations for change, a further inquiry was held to examine the implementation of recommendations relating specifically to workforce issues, workplace culture and funding considerations for remote, rural and regional health.

AMA (NSW) was asked to give evidence before the committee in relation to its submission to the inquiry.

Read AMA (NSW) Submission [here](#).



AMA (NSW) was represented at the hearing by President Dr Michael Bonning, CEO Fiona Davies, Mr Richard Colbran and Deputy Chair Dr Tim Couch.

NSW Upper House Inquiry into Equity, Accessibility and Appropriate Delivery of Outpatient and Community Mental Health Care in New South Wales

You can read AMA (NSW)'s submission [here](#).

And a transcript of the hearing [here](#).

The Federal Select Committee into the Provision of and Access to Dental Services in Australia

AMA (NSW) President Dr Michael Bonning appeared in his capacity of Chair of the AMA's Public Health Committee.

You can read the submission [here](#).

You can read a transcript [here](#).

And watch a section of Dr Bonning's evidence [here](#).

Monitor Operation of the Mandatory Disease Testing Act

The Ombudsman New South Wales [sought public submissions](#) on the Mandatory Disease Testing Act 2021.

You can read AMA (NSW)'s submission [here](#).

Guidelines for the Provision of Relevant Services (Health and Related Services) issued by SIRA

On December 8, 2023, SIRA issued new guidelines as part of their regulatory framework for those providing Health and Related Services to injured workers as a part of the Workers Compensation Scheme, and injured persons under the CTP Schemes. The Guidelines relate to [legislation](#) which gives SIRA broad powers to regulate doctors and other health providers.

AMA (NSW) has [expressed significant concern](#) to SIRA over the past two years and has secured some changes. However, we continue to have concerns about what this will mean for doctors providing services to injured persons.

AMA (NSW) will be holding a webinar in early 2024 to brief members on the legislation and the guidelines and possible implications for doctors and patients.

You can read the SIRA Guidelines [here](#).

Other issues

Pharmacy Prescribing Trial

The [You Deserve More](#) campaign was launched in April. See it [here](#).

Pharmacy Prescribing trial misses the mark for quality care. Read [here](#).

The State Budget [asks](#). AMA (NSW)'s Budget response [here](#) and [here](#).

Antimicrobial resistance – could be responsible for 10 million excess deaths globally by 2050. Read [here](#).

Voluntary Assisted Dying – Commonwealth needs to act to allow all NSW patients access to a dignified death. Read [here](#).

Palliative Care cuts “cruel” and heartless for the most vulnerable patients. Read [here](#).

Sugar tax – Read [here](#).

Road Safety Campaign

The combined campaign with the Road Trauma Support Group NSW was picked up by all major media outlets. Click [here](#).

Here are some examples from the media coverage;

[Channel Seven](#)

[ABC News](#)

[The Canberra Times](#)

Please feel free to write to us at any time at news@amansw.com.au