

Australian Medical Association Limited
ABN 37 008 426 793

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604
 Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499
 Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



AMA FORMALLY ADOPTS UPDATED WMA PLEDGE
Declaration of Geneva

The AMA has formally adopted the World Medical Association’s (WMA) updated pledge, the Declaration of Geneva, which recognises for the first time the need for doctors to look after their own health and wellbeing.

“The Declaration is referred to as the *Physician’s Pledge*, and is considered a modern successor to the Hippocratic Oath,” AMA President, Dr Michael Gannon, said today.

“The WMA was formed in 1947 with the AMA one of its founding members. It predates other international organisations and was formed, in many ways, in response to the atrocities outlined in the Nuremberg trials.

“The Declaration of Geneva was originally adopted by the WMA General Assembly in 1948 and has undergone a series of amendments throughout the years, with the previous most recent editorial review being in 2006.

“The latest amendments, made at the 68th WMA General Assembly in Chicago in October 2017, make several significant additions – most notably that, in order to provide a high standard of care to patients, doctors must look after their own health.

“This is particularly appropriate at a time when Australian doctors’ mental health and wellbeing, and the need for doctors to be able to seek help without fearing that they will not be allowed to practise, is being discussed.

“The COAG Health Council is considering ways to lift the mandatory reporting requirements that force doctors who are treating other doctors for mental health issues to report their patient to regulatory authorities as being impaired.

“The AMA supports the nationwide introduction of the Western Australian model, which exempts doctors from mandatory reporting.

“It is time for the other States and Territories to act. A healthy medical workforce is essential for patient safety.

“The Declaration of Geneva is a fluid document, respectful of traditional Hippocratic ethics, but responsive to the changing nature of the relationship between doctors and patients, and reflecting the current values that the profession and wider society expects of doctors.

“The AMA encourages all doctors to adhere to the principles and commitments outlined in the updated Declaration of Geneva.”

The formal decision to adopt the updated Declaration was made at the AMA’s final Federal Council meeting of 2017.

3 January 2018

CONTACT: John Flannery 02 6270 5477 / 0419 494 761
 Maria Hawthorne 02 6270 5478 / 0427 209 753