

Dr Bennie Ng steps down as AMA (WA) CEO

The AMA (WA) has entered a period of leadership transition, with Dr Bennie Ng stepping down from the role of Chief Executive Officer after more than six years in the role.

Dr Ng has resigned to pursue other opportunities including board roles and take some well-earned time off. He has faithfully served the organisation and its members, and the AMA (WA) thanks him for this service as we wish him the best for the future.

The Board has appointed Katie Thomas, the General Manager of Training, to serve as Interim CEO.

Katie is a highly intelligent, driven and capable leader with a deep commitment to the AMA (WA)'s mission. She was recently awarded her Master of Business Administration from the University of New South Wales. She will be well-supported by the Board and other members of the AMA (WA)'s senior management.

Whilst many of the members and the general public know the AMA (WA) by its leaders elected from the membership, the CEO is critical in steering the ship behind the scenes – managing the excellent staff who deliver value to the members, driving and delivering on strategy, and ensuring sound financial underpinnings.

The organisation has commenced the national search for the new substantive CEO, and has engaged executive search firm Derwent for this task. We are seeking a dynamic, proactive, commercially savvy leader of high integrity and with a member-first approach, and are confident that we will find the right person to drive the Association forward.

Dr Ng reflected on his time as CEO.

Dr Ng said returning to Perth to take up the role, just before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, was always going to make for what he described as "an interesting journey". He noted that the timing shaped much of his tenure and provided no shortage of challenges and opportunities for reflection.

As Chief Executive of a registered union, Dr Ng said a key focus of his leadership was industrial advocacy. He led two Industrial Agreements, which he described as "hard fought", and pointed to significant gains for WA hospital doctors, including improvements in pay, working conditions and job security. These outcomes included permanency of tenure,



“It’s been an honour to have served the AMA (WA). I am proud of what we have achieved together.”

portability of benefits, a number of group, specialty and hospital-based agreements, and national recognition of WA rural generalists as specialists for the first time in Australia.

Beyond industrial matters, Dr Ng reflected on the organisation's policy and advocacy functions, saying that "advocating for impactful policies is a given". Under his leadership, the AMA (WA) played a role in major reforms and investments, from the introduction of Voluntary Assisted Dying in WA to increased funding for hospitals, general practice and Medicare. He noted that the pandemic brought the organisation into the public spotlight, with the AMA (WA) central to discussions on border closures, quarantine arrangements and vaccination policy as part of broader public health decision-making.

He said he was particularly proud of leading teams that established new initiatives such as AMA CPD Home – the first non-college accredited CPD body in Australia – as well as the AMA Nursing School, AMA Financial Services and, most recently, AMA (WA) Legal. He also described it as a privilege to support the Doctors' Health Advisory Service WA, alongside other for-purpose initiatives including Dr YES, Youth Friendly Doctor, and the Benevolent Fund.

Dr Ng was grateful to the many people who had backed him during his tenure.

"I could not have done it without the support of current and past Presidents, boards, councils, practice groups, members and staff. To all our partners and stakeholders, it has been great working with you to advance different causes." ■