Dr Drake-Brockman recognised at AMA26 as new federal leadership elected

AMA (WA) Councillor and newly appointed Board member Dr Thomas Drake-Brockman has been recognised nationally for their longstanding commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in medicine, receiving the Australian Medical Association's 2026 Diversity in Medicine Award at the AMA26 National Conference.

At the conference, appointed delegates voted to elect the AMA's next leadership team, with Sydney GP Dr Michael Bonning elected as the next Federal AMA President, and Melbourne emergency medicine specialist Dr Sarah Whitelaw elected as Vice President.

Dr Drake-Brockman was honoured for their sustained leadership across clinical practice, medical advocacy, policy development and community engagement, helping to create a profession that is more inclusive and responsive to the needs of both doctors and patients from diverse backgrounds.

Announcing the award, outgoing AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen praised Dr Drake-Brockman's practical advocacy and leadership.

"Dr Drake-Brockman has made a significant contribution to improving inclusion in medicine through practical action and principled advocacy," Dr McMullen said. "They have been a tireless advocate for a medical profession that values and supports people from all backgrounds, and for a healthcare system that delivers safe and respectful care for everyone."

A rural generalist registrar, Dr Drake-Brockman has championed issues affecting women doctors, parents, international medical graduates, doctors with disability, and LGBTQIASB+ doctors and patients. Their advocacy has extended through leadership roles including AMA (WA) Doctors in Training Co-Chair, President of the Rural Doctors Association of WA, Chairperson of Transfolk WA, and Director of Pride WA. They have also contributed to state and national policy development on LGBTIQA+ health and inclusion.



AMA Vice President Elect Dr Sarah Whitelaw and AMA President Elect Dr Michael Bonning.



Dr Thomas Drake-Brockman (middle) with AMA Vice President A/Prof Dr Julian Rait and AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen.

Accepting the award, Dr Drake-Brockman emphasised that meaningful change requires collective action across the profession and broader community.

"I'm grateful to the AMA for this recognition, and to my many colleagues and fellow advocates who are working to ensure healthcare in Australia is safe and welcoming for everybody," they said.

"We know parts of our community and our profession face historical and ongoing discrimination in healthcare settings. This includes women, LGBTQIA+ people, First Nations peoples, people from culturally and racially marginalised backgrounds, and migrants. To change this requires the collective effort of individuals, our profession, institutions, and governments."

Dr Drake-Brockman added that equitable healthcare and respectful workplaces should be fundamental expectations for all Australians.

Dr Bonning, a former President of AMA NSW with extensive experience in clinical practice, health policy and medical leadership, said he was honoured to have been elected.

"My greatest focus is on communicating with members and doctors across the country, in person, online and social media, to hear from them and turn their experiences into actionable policy and advocacy," he said.

Dr Whitelaw, an AMA Federal Councillor and former Vice President of AMA Victoria, said she was honoured to be elected to the leadership team of AMA.

Dr Bonning and Dr Whitelaw will commence their terms on 2 November. ■

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