



**Australian Medical Association
Northern Territory**

Doctors voice serious concern over declining long-term health prospects for Territorians

At the largest meeting of its type in more than 5 years, over 50 doctors employed by the Territory government met yesterday to discuss the lack of progress in their pay claim.

Concerned that the Northern Territory health system was suffering because of low doctor numbers, they unanimously called on the Chief Executive Officer of the Health Department, Dr David Ashbridge to “deal with the issue in an urgent and constructive manner”.

Doctors at the meeting were informed that despite 15 months of negotiating, the government offer was, in most areas, so far below what is paid elsewhere that it would be unlikely that the Territory could attract and retain appropriate doctors to manage the sick, let alone provide important preventive screening.

Dr Peter Beaumont, Australian Medical Association NT President said “we have the least healthy population of any state or territory in Australia and the federal government has already had to send in teams to plug serious gaps in the care of endangered children. Doctors are reporting that gaps in care are increasing seriously, putting many more lives at risk”. “We need to pay market rates for doctors so that fellow Territorians can look forward to the level of healthcare they need to at least keep as healthy as the rest of Australia” Dr Beaumont said.

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