



## **RACHEL NOLAN MP**

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#### **IN-PRINCIPLE AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND SALARIED MEDICAL OFFICERS**

Premier Peter Beattie is delighted that the Queensland Government and negotiators for doctors employed in Queensland public hospitals have reached in-principle agreement on an employment package worth more than \$600 million in new money over three years.

The Government will aim to put the offer out to ballot in about three weeks.

“If accepted, it means that doctors and the Government can spend 100 per cent of our time working together on curing problems identified in Queensland Health and restoring people’s confidence in the public hospital system,” said Mr Beattie.

“The in-principle agreement is a win for the doctors and a win for all Queenslanders.

“Nearly 3,400 salaried medical officers, from those just out of medical school right up to the most senior specialists, have the best deals ever offered by a Queensland Government.

“The offer that I put on the table on Sunday afternoon demonstrated how much we value the salaried medical officers in our public hospitals

“Deputy Premier Anna Bligh, Industrial Relations Minister Tom Barton, Health Minister Stephen Robertson and I told the doctors’ representatives that we wanted to meet them on Sunday because we wanted to work with them to find a solution.

“The cost to taxpayers is more than \$600 million in new money but it was essential to offer them salary packages which are comparable with interstate.

“There is a worldwide shortage of doctors and we have to attract and retain more of them if we are to rebuild our world-class health system and restore people’s faith that they will receive first-class treatment in our public hospitals.

"This settlement follows the agreement with visiting medical officers which is worth about \$100 million over four years.

"The two agreements also show we are fair dinkum about investing the budget surplus in health, to ensure that Queenslanders have continuing expert care.

"I thank all the doctors for agreeing to work with the government to rebuild Queenslanders' confidence in the public health system."

Health Minister Stephen Robertson said the government's offer acknowledged the significant role public hospital doctors would play in helping to rebuild the health system.

"We value the work they do and this offer shows we are committed to working together with doctors to rebuild and improve the system for all Queenslanders.

"Today's agreement also allows all of us to now concentrate on the significant reforms that lay ahead."

Dr Nick Buckmaster, representing the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation of Queensland said: "The package that we will take to our members will provide them with pay and conditions which are at the forefront of Australia rather than trailing a long way behind.

"Importantly, there are commitments from the Government to restore training, teaching and research back into our public health system and commitments to provide access to education for our junior doctors which will assist them in becoming our future specialist workforce.

"We believe our members will recognise the very significant effort that has been put in to restore the quality and safety of our hospital system through providing a package which will attract and retain doctors of the highest quality.

"It will also restore confidence for the doctors who, during a period of unprecedented upheaval and difficulty, have stayed with the public hospital system through their extraordinary commitment to providing their skills and expertise to Queenslanders."

Queensland Public Sector Union General Secretary Alex Scott welcomed the Government's commitment to fixing the health crisis.

"This agreement will make real improvements in the pay and conditions of full-time doctors in Queensland Health and will go a long way to ensure good doctors stay in our public hospitals," Mr Scott said.

"It's vital that Queensland Health can attract the best-possible health professionals.

"For the first time Queensland will be able to compete with other states to attract doctors.

"And we need to keep training our doctors in new procedures and treatments.

"This agreement provides professional development to allow them to stay at the cutting edge of medical science."