

Doctors will fight the wage freeze

ASMOF - the Doctors Union - is deeply disappointed that the NSW Government has decided to press ahead and freeze the wages and conditions of thousands of doctors working in public hospitals across NSW.

ASMOF NSW President, Dr Tony Sara, said the NSW Government's wage freeze for the public sector is a disgraceful attack on the state's workers.

"At the same time that we are told that we are heroes, the NSW Government docks our pay and our ability to negotiate for better conditions," Dr Sara said.

"This is a slap in the face to all essential workers, including doctors who have been working tirelessly throughout this pandemic to treat patients - sometimes at risk to their own health and safety. Alongside our colleagues in health we have ensured that the NSW public health system has been equipped to cope with this crisis.

"Not only does it show a complete lack of recognition for this work but it has no sound economic rationale. Ironically, the research shows that public sector pay freezes could push economy from recession to depression.

"Our public sector workers are worth more than this.

"A wage freeze will certainly worsen an environment which is already hostile to increases in legal protections for doctors. Prior to this pandemic, the NSW Government's wages policy had already been spectacularly successful in limiting wage increases and preventing fair and reasonable industrial gains for doctors – like safer working hours."

Dr Jeffery Wang, co-chair of ASMOF NSW Doctors in Training Committee said the move to freeze pay will serve to exacerbate the inequity between NSW junior doctors and those in other states.

"Junior doctors in NSW already have some of the poorest working conditions across Australia. Our Award is over 35 years old and in desperate need of an update.

"Doctors, nurses and our colleagues across Health have been on the frontline of this crisis and we stand together. We won't let it be used as an excuse to further weaken our conditions.

"Doctors stand with nurses, teachers and other essential workers in opposing the NSW Government's wage freeze and will be considering what actions are available to us to fight it."

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MEDIA CONTACTS:

Dr Tony Sara, President, ASMOF- 0417498691/Andrew Holland, Executive Director, ASMOF- 0405276030