

MEDIA RELEASE

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AMA welcomes new Director General of Australian Centre for Disease Control

The Australian Medical Association today welcomed the appointment of Professor Zoe Wainer as the Director General of Australia's Centre for Disease Control.

Professor Wainer is an experienced clinician and the current Deputy Secretary of the Victorian Department of Health and brings a wealth of experience to this important new role.

"Professor Wainer has extensive experience in health, with roles internationally and in Australia, including in medicine, research, public health and with both the Victorian AMA and the federal AMA," AMA Vice President A/Prof Julian Rait said.

"She had a key role in overseeing Victoria's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and led major reforms in environmental health and women's health, including representing Australia at the UN Convention on the Status of Women, and is a fantastic appointment," A/Prof Rait said.

"In my time as AMA Victoria President, I witnessed Professor Wainer's exemplary role in overseeing the state's response to the pandemic."

The AMA was the flag bearer in calling for an Australian CDC, to help ensure Australia is better prepared for the next pandemic and future health challenges, A/Prof Rait said.

"In 2017 we called for the immediate establishment of an Australian National Centre for Disease Control, with a national focus on current and emerging communicable disease threats, global health surveillance, health security, epidemiology and research.

"The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the critical need for a coordinated, expert and independent body in Australia to manage current and emerging disease threats."

"We supported the establishment of the Australian CDC as a statutory agency under the *Australian Centre for Disease Control Act 2025* and have always said its credibility will rest on strong clinical and scientific expert leadership, which is what Professor Wainer brings.

A/Prof Rait said the AMA would continue to advocate for the CDC to be informed by a diverse range of professions, such as clinical medicine, epidemiology, public health, environmental health, occupational and environmental medicine, disaster medicine, veterinary and agricultural science, social sciences, ethics, technology, and communications.

"The CDC will play a key role in bringing together science with real time monitoring of diseases and must draw on the expertise of coalface clinicians such as general practitioners to ensure practical connectivity across all parts of the health system," he said.

"The AMA is looking forward to working very closely with Professor Wainer and CDC staff on public health issues, including preparedness for the inevitable next pandemic."

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