



Hon Lawrence Springborg MP
Minister for Health

15 April, 2014

Level 19
147-163 Charlotte Street Brisbane 4000
GPO Box 48 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3234 1191
Facsimile +61 7 3229 4731
Email health@ministerial.qld.gov.au

SMO Taskforce
c/- LukeF@hallpayne.com.au

Dear Drs Royle, Elliot, Donald, Senthuran, Crawford, Fairweather, Tan, Thomas, Davison, Buckmaster, Sara, Ross, Wu, McManus, Finn, Turnbull and Morrison

Thank you for your letter dated 13 April, 2014 and for your positive contribution to finalising matters in relation to Senior Medical contracts. I am pleased that we have reached general agreement on the content of the new employment contracts for Queensland Health's senior and visiting medical officers.

The final contract offer incorporates the intent of the previously released contract addendum along with other alterations discussed, negotiated and agreed.

This document delivers the clarity our doctors have been seeking. It also supports a framework which enables our Hospital and Health Boards and the services which they oversee, to engage and innovate with senior clinicians and indeed the broader health workforce, to continue to drive excellence in healthcare services for patients.

This becomes even more relevant in an environment where this Government allows HHS's to retain the proceeds of its clinicians' hard-work (last financial year about \$150m across the state's 16 HHS's) and reinvest it as a local health service dividend for additional patient services in local areas.

I have briefed Cabinet on the agreement reached to date and they support it in principle, pending finalisation of the matters referred to in your letter.

Concurrent with this, Cabinet has supported my request that the deadline for signature for the new contracts be extended to 31 May 2014, with the contracts to come into effect from 4 August 2014. Current private practice arrangements will be extended by directive until this date.

This will provide hospital and health services an opportunity to properly issue the new contracts and senior medical officers appropriate time to consider their contract and take personal advice as necessary. It will mean senior medical officers can enjoy their Easter break and the subsequent shorter weeks towards the end of April, without having to expedite the return of their contract.

I can also assure you, and please take this as a written commitment, that the new SMO and VMO contracts and health employment directives as agreed today, will be implemented unchanged.

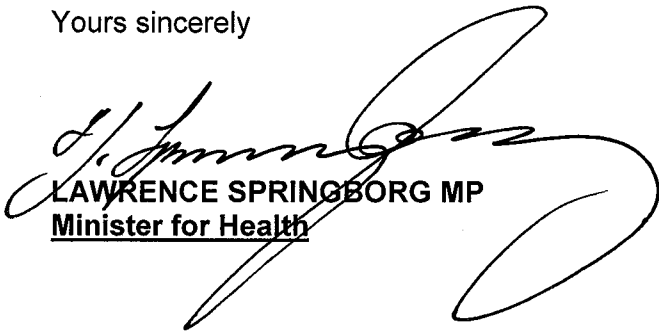
To truly deliver the health system Queenslanders expect and deserve, we all agree Queensland Health and its doctors will need to work as a team to improve care for our patients, providing better options and measurable outcomes.

Recent months have seen misunderstandings and miscommunications which raised concerns in the minds of many of our clinicians. I am personally committed to ensuring such a situation never happens again, and I will be working extremely hard to provide our doctors with avenues that encourage participation in the changes being pursued at Queensland Health, as outlined in the *Blueprint for better healthcare in Queensland*.

When we sat down together in recent weeks, both sides became focused on a joint objective – to ensure patients were protected, their safety assured and their care guaranteed. I believe we have generated a renewed spirit of cooperation and partnership between Queensland Health, Hospital and Health Services, doctors and their representatives which will lay the groundwork for the challenges we face going forward.

Hospital and Health Services have achieved some amazing improvements working in partnership with their senior workforces over the past two years in particular. These results now establish the Queensland health system as leader of sustainable performance amongst its peers across the country.

Yours sincerely



LAWRENCE SPRINGBORG MP
Minister for Health