

Dr. Annette Barratt  
Vice President  
Australian Medical Association (AMA) Tasmania  
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Australian Medical Professionals Society  
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4 March 2024

Dear Dr Annette Barratt,

### Request for apology & notice of concerns

1. We are writing to express our deep concern regarding the recent actions of the Australian Medical Association ('AMA') Tasmania, specifically pertaining to their treatment of Dr Julie Sladden, a member of the Australian Medical Professionals Society ('AMPS').
2. It has come to our attention that on 21 February 2024 AMA Tasmania issued a [public statement](#) in the form of a media release ('**your statement**') which has been widely published, e.g. see [ABC News](#).
3. Your statement was referring to Dr Sladden's political activity, and stated:
  - a. "Liberal Party's *anti-vaccine doctor* selection is a *misstep*";
  - b. "AMA Tasmania is highly concerned about the message the Liberal Party is sending to Tasmanians when it pre-selects a doctor whose anti-vaccine *opinions are dangerous and misleading*"; and
  - c. Argued that Ms Sladden's candidacy was "*untenable*" because Dr Sladden was "undermining" best clinical advice.
4. Some AMPS members alleged that your statement may be a form of intimidation against Dr Sladden and the Tasmanian Liberal Party, which may be unlawful pursuant to s 189 *Tasmanian Electoral Act 2004*.
5. Please reflect on codes 3.2.1 and 3.2.3 of AMA's [Code of Ethics 2004](#) which codifies for you to "Treat your colleagues with *respect and dignity*" and "Refrain from undertaking actions such as making comments which may *unfairly damage the reputation of a colleague*."
6. Further, AMPS' membership genuinely believe that the AMA has not recognised how pharmaceutical and other medical marketing influences have affected their practice as codified in code 8.11.4 [Good Medical Practice: Code of Conduct 2009](#).
7. We welcome the opportunity for a nuanced debate with the AMA on policy and pharmacology.
8. It is not the role of the AMA Tasmania to dictate political affiliations or defame candidates based on discerning and lawful clinical and political beliefs and activities. We respectfully urge you and the AMA Tasmania to:
  9. cease all public shaming, disrespect, or alleged defamation of our member; and
  10. issue an apology to Dr Sladden for your improper attempt to influence political affairs.
11. The AMA Tasmania should uphold its principles of intellectual freedom and political neutrality, acknowledge clear iatrogenic harms, and promote diversity of lawful opinions.

Respectfully,

*Kara Thomas*

Secretary  
Australian Medical Professionals Society