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TIME TO GO PUBLIC

Border Mail, Albury-Wodonga

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Having previously conducted its work behind the scenes, the Australian Medical Association Victoria has aired its concerns about Albury Wodonga Health in the wake of the suspension of a senior medical professional on the Border. **STORY: PAGE 3**

Peak medical body speaks out for first time

Hana Humboldt

VICTORIA'S peak doctors group has gone public with its concerns about the situation at Albury Wodonga Health, including "the suspension" of a senior doctor.

Australian Medical Association Victoria (AMAV) released a statement on Tuesday, saying it had worked with staff at Albury Wodonga Health in recent months regarding "issues involving staff and hospital executive".

"This work has been undertaken in good faith and has included discussions with clinicians, government, the Department of Health and Safer Care Victoria (SCV) in the hope that a constructive resolution could be found," the statement read.

"Until now we have deliberately kept that work largely behind the scenes in the hope that a constructive resolution could be reached.

"However, events last week have shown us that we are a long way away from that, and

that it is now important that these concerns are acknowledged publicly.

"The suspension of a senior and highly respected member of the medical fraternity, Dr David Clancy, has had seen a reaction from staff and community which is profound.

"Staff who have contacted AMAV are incredibly distressed and angry about this latest action and have raised concerns about the lack of transparency, the poor communication and the lack of trust they had in the processes that led to this decision.

"It is understood that the AWH board has made the decision to stand the doctor down based on a SCV report that has not been provided to the doctor or his representatives.

"We also understand that the doctor has not been named in the report."

The original report has

been sought by both AMAV and *The Border Mail*.

A Safer Care Victoria spokesperson said the independent review began in November and is focusing "on workplace culture, leadership, communication, and support systems" and how they "shape staff wellbeing and the delivery of safe, effective care".

"Safer Care Victoria's quality and safety review is confidential and legally privileged under the Health Services Act," they said.

"We are supporting Albury Wodonga Health to better understand the impacts of workplace culture on staff wellbeing, particularly in reference to its surgical services and emergency department."

Dr Clancy was seen being walked out of AWH through the intensive care unit on Wednesday, March 4.

AMAV representatives will

be meeting with the wider medical community at AWH in the coming days to "gain a deeper understanding of how we can support the dedicated staff at the facility".

"At a time when health services across Victoria are being asked to prioritise staff wellbeing and psychological safety, it is essential that organisational processes are trusted by the workforce and that communication with clinicians is open and transparent," the statement read.

Albury Wodonga Health was also contacted for comment.

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The apparent ousting of senior Border emergency doctor David Clancy prompts public backlash from Victoria's peak healthcare representatives. File picture