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**Title:**

Press release: Doctors' Fees

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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN.

DOCTORS' FEES.

1.8.73

Medical services in South Australia are to be declared services under the Prices Act, the Premier, Mr. Dunstan, announced today.

He made the announcement following discussions on doctors' fees with officials of the Australian Medical Association this morning.

But the Premier said he had agreed that no general order specifying fees for doctors would be made, provided doctors comply with the recommendations of the Prices Commissioner for a 12½% fee increase.

Individual doctors making excessive charges may on complaint be subject to individual price orders. Their names would be published.

The Premier published a letter handed to Dr. M.J.W. Sando, President of the S.A. branch of the A.M.A., today setting out the Government's attitude.

Mr. Dunstan said he was taking these steps as it was apparent that not all doctors would be prepared to comply with the Prices Commissioner's recommendations.

But, in view of the A.M.A.'s expressed desire to establish a working relationship with the Government, he had agreed not to establish formal price control on the profession generally.

The Government also appreciated that there were matters arising from the Prices Commissioner's report which the A.M.A. wanted to discuss at greater length.

Accordingly he was arranging an early meeting between the Commissioner and the Association to see whether there could be further agreement on fees pending the findings of the Commonwealth's Medical Fees Tribunal.

Mr. Dunstan said the A.M.A. representatives had told him they appreciated the attitude the Government had taken to the question of fee increases over the past few days and enquired whether a formal working arrangement could be established.

"I readily consented to this", the Premier said.

(Correspondents: A copy of the Premier's letter is attached.)