The Victorian Government has vowed to change the way hospitals are run if an investigation finds two young doctors who committed suicide were victims of workplace pressure.

Health Minister Bronwyn Pike said today the Government would work closely with the Australian Medical Association (AMA), which also hit out at the nation's hospitals today for the "exorbitant" workload imposed on trainee doctors.

This followed the news that senior doctors were preparing a report on hospital working conditions, prompted by the suicides of 32-year-old Chanh Thaow and 29-year-old Lachlan McIntyre.

Mr Thaow, a trainee surgeon at The Alfred hospital in Melbourne, took his own life on March 11, while Mr McIntyre, an intensive care registrar at St Vincent's Hospital, committed suicide on December 16 last year.

“The AMA is watching this very closely and we will certainly cooperate with them on their findings on this issue,” Ms Pike said.

“If there is something systemic in our hospitals that is damaging to young doctors, then I would want to know about that and do everything that I could to change that dynamic.”

The doctors' findings will also be handed to the coroner investigating Mr Thaow's death.

Ms Pike also said the Government had provided extra support to doctors and they did not work the “brutal” hours they did in the past, but a report in newspapers today said Mr Thaow had complained of working up to 36-hour shifts.

AMA President Dr Mukesh Haikerwal said workload remained a major problem for young doctors, who performed high-stress roles commonly for “long hours often unrostered and on unpaid overtime”.

“The tragic suicide of two of our younger colleagues is an example of the stress that doctors-in-training face on a daily basis,” he said today.

“Despite the AMA's safe working campaign, and the AMA's safe rostering campaign, there continues to exorbitant numbers of hours worked by doctors in the health care system – and that is wrong.”

The Alfred hospital said it could not comment on Mr Thaow's death due to the coronial inquest.

“However, we are continually striving to ensure that the health and well being of our junior doctors is a priority,” the hospital's Director of Medical Services, Dr Lee Hamley, said today.

A spokesman for St Vincent's Hospital said “our primary focus is always to ensure the wellbeing of our staff as well as the treatment of our patients”.

"The Australian: Action vow after doctor suicide probe [13sep06]"