



*The voice of rural child health*

ABN 93 622 296 075

# Australian Paediatric Society

PO Box 1139

Geelong Vic 3220

[admin@drqoss.com.au](mailto:admin@drqoss.com.au)

## Statement on Federal Government Parliamentary Inquiry into Diabetes

The Australian Paediatric Society (APS), a Special Society of the RACP representing over 300 paediatricians who manage over 4000 (or 1 in 3) young Australians with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) applaud Health Minister Mark Butler for establishing a Parliamentary Inquiry into Diabetes. Minister Butler has listened to valid concerns about inequity, underperformance and even unlawful programs that exist and require urgent redress to keep our children safe and guarantee their future.

The APS has been a vocal advocate for equitable and higher quality management of Type 1 Diabetes for all young Australians for many years. Diabetes is the least funded of the chronic childhood conditions and rural children are the most poorly resourced. All children with Type 1 Diabetes are entitled to the best possible care and deserve equitable distribution of resources.

Poor diabetes management results in severe, costly physical and emotional health complications and early death. Whereas quality management enables a safe, healthy life with no reduced life expectancy.

“Australia should be ashamed of the measured outcomes for our young and vulnerable, when we know what is possible in other countries like Sweden. Australian outcomes are a national embarrassment with less than 20% of children with Type 1 Diabetes meeting targets that protect children from long term harm. This is an indictment of current models of care, lack of effective support services and poor and self-serving advice to Government. Rural and consumer voices are currently not being heard.”

We are absolutely delighted that Minister Butler has announced the Parliamentary Inquiry into Diabetes to understand why Australia is performing in the bottom quartile of well-resourced countries, to understand the need for substantial change and therefore to initiate building a sustainable long term framework to implement that change.

“Only one major centre in Australia, the John Hunter Childrens Hospital, produces clinical outcomes in the top 10% of the world. Many smaller teams who follow the John Hunter model of care also produce excellent outcomes. That demonstrates what is possible.

The APS recognises the insight, perspective and determination for better health outcomes by MP paediatrician Mike Freeland who will lead the Parliamentary Inquiry into Diabetes. Minister Butler, Dr Freeland, and the parliamentary inquiry team can now facilitate a way forward to not just redress significant health inequities but to propel Australia towards becoming a world leader in Type 1 Diabetes for the benefit of all living with such a relentless, demanding, and disempowering condition.

Peter Goss FRACP

Chair Diabetes Australian Paediatric Society

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