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Media Release

Physicians urge Government to swiftly adopt recommendations of diabetes inquiry to support patients

The Federal Government must urgently implement the recommendations outlined in the final report of the Diabetes Inquiry held by the Parliamentary Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sports ^[1], the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) has said.

The RACP has welcomed the recommendations by the Parliamentary Committee as a major win for people living with diabetes and obesity across Australia.

Professor Jennifer Martin, President of the RACP, said that if implemented, the recommendations would help provide vital medical support to people living with diabetes and obesity and would help significantly improve their quality of life.

“The implementation of these recommendations will be transformative for people living with diabetes and obesity.

“The Committee has rightly recognised that people living with diabetes often have to contend with very high prices and long waiting times when trying to access vital medical supports that can greatly help with insulin and weight management. Consistent with our recommendations, the Committee has called on the Government to fund longer MBS consultations, support telehealth and broaden case coordination models for people with obesity and diabetes.

“We thank the Committee for heeding calls from the RACP ^[2] and recommending that the Government subsidise access to evidence-based pharmaceuticals, monitoring devices and bariatric surgeries for people living with diabetes and obesity.

“We now encourage the Australian Government and the Department of Health to swiftly adopt these recommendations.

“Over the past few decades, we have seen a gradual but steady increase in the rates of people living with diabetes, especially type two diabetes, and obesity across Australia.

“This has put an immense amount of pressure on families, patients themselves and also Australia’s health care system.

“Making access to essential therapeutics and other forms of medical care more affordable for people living with diabetes and obesity will have immense impact and the Government must act now,” Prof Martin said.

Professor Louise Baur, FRACP, consultant paediatrician and a key expert on childhood obesity in Australia, said: “It is very encouraging to see that the Committee has recommended that Australian Government consider other vital reforms which can prevent type two diabetes and obesity, especially amongst young children.

“Childhood obesity can lead to many chronic health issues, including type two diabetes and it is imperative that we try and prevent its rise and treat those who live with obesity.

“As called for by the RACP’s Kids Catch Up ^[3] and Switch off the Junk ^[4] campaigns, more accurate food labels, a tax on sugary drinks and a total ban on junk food advertising for children are all steps that can help address this challenge.

“For far too long obesity and type two diabetes have been understood as conditions that are caused by personal choices; however, we have ample research to show that this is untrue.

“The Committee has provided the Australian Government and the Department of Health with a clear pathway to take the steps necessary to help tackle the external factors contributing to high rates of obesity and type two diabetes, especially amongst children.

“It is now imperative that they act swiftly and implement these recommendations as a matter of priority,” Prof Baur said.

[\[1\] Parliamentary Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport – Diabetes Inquiry – Final Report](#)

[\[2\] RACP Submission – Diabetes Inquiry](#)

[\[3\] RACP – Kids Catch Up Campaign](#)

[\[4\] RACP – Switch off the Junk Campaign](#)

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About the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP):

The RACP trains, educates, and advocates on behalf of over 28,000 physicians and 8,000 trainee physicians, across Australia and New Zealand. The College represents a broad range of medical specialties including general medicine, paediatrics and child health, cardiology, respiratory medicine, infectious diseases, neurology, oncology, public health medicine, occupational and environmental medicine, palliative medicine, sexual health medicine, rehabilitation medicine, geriatric medicine, and addiction medicine. Beyond the drive for medical excellence, the RACP is committed to developing health and social policies which bring vital improvements to the wellbeing of patient. The College offers 61 training pathways. These lead to the award of one of seven qualifications that align with 45 specialist titles recognised by the Medical Board of Australia or allow for registration in nine vocational scopes with the Medical Council of New Zealand.