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Diabetes sector calls for fair access to Automated Insulin Delivery systems

Leading organisations across the diabetes sector are calling for equitable access to Automated Insulin Delivery (AID) systems.

Melbourne endocrinologist Dr Ben Nash penned an open letter to Mike Freeland MP, Chair of the Federal Standing Committee on Health.

The letter states that Australia is falling behind other developed countries in providing equitable and affordable access to AID systems.

An established standard of care for people with type 1 diabetes, AID systems improve blood glucose management and quality of life.

However, access to insulin pump therapy – a key component of an AID system – is influenced by socioeconomic status, rather than clinical need.

The letter has been endorsed by Diabetes Victoria and over 15 other diabetes organisations Australia-wide.

“If you can’t afford gold tier health insurance, you’re looking at over \$8000 out of pocket for an insulin pump,” Dr Nash explains.

“Less than 30 percent of Australians with type 1 diabetes use an insulin pump, with twice as many pump users living in high socioeconomic areas compared to low socioeconomic areas.

“This is not a research issue. This is an equity issue. The evidence for improved quality of life, glucose levels, and cost-effectiveness is clear.”

“If we maintain the status quo, we are baking inequity into standard type 1 diabetes care.”

Diabetes Victoria CEO Glen Noonan says all Victorians living with diabetes deserve affordable access to quality treatment and technologies.

“Limited access to insulin pumps and AID systems makes it difficult for people who would benefit from these technologies to manage their diabetes effectively,” Mr Noonan says.

“This can lead to long-term complications reducing both quality and length of life.

“Treatment and technology should be affordable and easy to access for all people living with diabetes, regardless of location, age, or cultural background.

“We are proud to unite with other leading organisations in the diabetes sector to spotlight this.”



Dr Nash lives with type 1 diabetes, as does his father, mother, and sister. He sees the Parliamentary Inquiry into Diabetes as an opportunity to transform health outcomes for all Australians living with type 1.

“The letter is to help shine a spotlight on a longstanding access issue impacting many Australians living with type 1 diabetes,” he says.

“It was circulated to consumer, research, and health professional groups nationwide and within 72 hours, major diabetes organisations in Australia had signed.

“It’s nice to see unified support for improving access to this life changing treatment at a time when policy change is on the table.

“This is about leveling the playing field for everyone living with T1D, regardless of their bank balance or postcode.”

Clinical trials and real-world evidence have shown AID systems lead to the greatest improvements for people with higher long-term average blood glucose levels.

Given lower socioeconomic status is strongly associated with increasing blood glucose levels, those most likely to benefit from AID systems are also the least likely to have access.

“AID is now considered standard care. We know diabetes technology improves outcomes regardless of socioeconomic background,” Dr Nash says.

“It’s time for universal access to AID.

“We can no longer support a two-tiered system, where the people most likely to benefit from standard care are excluded due to cost, rather than clinical need.”

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