



# Australian Paediatric Society.

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*GEELONG VIC*

*The voice of rural child health*

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## **Media Statement on Coronial Inquiry - Lachlan Cook**

20<sup>th</sup> December 2023

The tragic preventable death of Lachlan Cook whilst in the custody of his school in late 2019 has shone a light on a known workplace safety issue for students with Type 1 Diabetes. It is hoped for the sake of Lachlan's family and the many people involved in the tragedy, that Governments and education authorities will now seize the opportunity to redress the lack of requisite training for school staff as required by Workplace safety and revise the current unlawful and inadequate school programs for all students with Type 1 Diabetes.

The Australian Paediatric Society, as the strongest medical advocates for appropriate protections for both students with Type 1 Diabetes and their teachers, welcome the coronial findings of her honour Audrey Jamieson. We have long been aligned with her recommendation for requisite teacher training for Type 1 diabetes and the need to understand that adolescents who self-manage their care still rely on a level of expertise and training to assist them if they become unwell and incapable of self-management. We welcome the current WorkSafe investigation into the systemic failings that we identified over 9 years ago, 5 years before Lachlan's death and unfortunately still exist.

The Australian Paediatric Society urges Governments to now adopt and embrace the international best practice ISPAD Position Statements on Management of Type 1 Diabetes in schools. We created the world-first, award winning e-learning courses for Type 1 Diabetes based on international ISPAD best practice available to all schools at no cost since 2017 ([www.t1d.org.au](http://www.t1d.org.au)). Those courses comprehended the exact scenario faced by Lachlan Cook and his school two years before his fateful school camp. Tragically, the offer to disseminate the courses to all schools, including Lachlan's school, was not supported at that time by Governments and peak bodies.

The 2024 ISPAD Position Statement explanatory infographic, endorsed by the Australian Paediatric Society, outlines the international best practice of roles, responsibilities and requisite training and can be found at <https://www.t1d.org.au/resources/ispad-infographic-diabetes-in-schools-2024>.

The T1D Learning Centre, ([www.t1d.org.au](http://www.t1d.org.au)) sponsored by the Australian Paediatric Society, has created several resources to mitigate risk for students and teachers at school camps, both local and international, and to facilitate all students with T1D to attend camps with staff with accredited training and qualification.

What remains missing to ensure such a tragedy is not repeated are to address two major issues:

1. That governments provide qualification and accreditation for requisite training of school staff,
2. That State Governments and all education authorities deliver adequate support, including funding, for all students with Type 1 Diabetes irrespective of age and location.

The Australian Paediatric Society calls on the Federal Government and State Governments to convene a T1D School Summit in the new year to involve all stakeholders that must include important stakeholders excluded from previous consultations:

- **Independent consumer groups**
- **Teacher unions**
- **Nurses' unions**
- **WorkSafe**

to ensure safe systems of work are created in all schools for both students and teachers. The T1D School Summit should aspire to bring clear, unambiguous language to school policy for T1D that adopts international best practice as outlined in the just completed 2024 ISPAD Position Statement on Diabetes in schools.

With the coronial inquiry recommending requisite training for school staff, the Federal Government has been handed a golden opportunity to lead the production of a comprehensive, efficient international-standard Diabetes in Schools program in place of the current non-compliant program that does not provide the required requisite training. As a world authority on Type 1 Diabetes management at school, the Australian Paediatric Society is willing to lead those revisions.



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Co-Chair ISPAD Position Statement Management Type 1 Diabetes in Schools 2018

Co-Chair ISPAD Position Statement Management Type 1 Diabetes in Schools 2024

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