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AMA CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE LOCKDOWN OF ALL METROPOLITAN SYDNEY TO TACKLE NEW COVID STRAIN

The Australian Medical Association (AMA) has called on the New South Wales Government to immediately lockdown all of Metropolitan Sydney to give it a better chance of tackling the outbreak of the new dangerous COVID-19 Delta strain.

AMA President Dr Omar Khorshid said that while the AMA is pleased the NSW Government has gone further than before announcing a lockdown in four local government areas, this was “just not enough.”

“What we really need are clear rules for all Sydneysiders that say stay home so that we can get ahead of the virus and stop further transmission,” said Dr Khorshid.

“The Delta strain is different. It is being transmitted far more easily and everyone has acknowledged this. Sydney has not faced this before and this means a different approach is required.

He said the NSW Government’s response announced today was “confusing for many” in Sydney, particularly for people who worked in the Sydney CBD and live outside this area, because of the risk of transmitting COVID to their families.

“A lockdown of Metropolitan Sydney would be the right move. The rules need to apply equally to the whole of Sydney to allow us to get ahead of this virus, and give the contact tracers a chance to catch up and try to avoid months and months of restrictions in Sydney.

“The economic consequences of lockdown are significant. But the economic consequences of getting this wrong are catastrophic, not just for Sydney but for all of Australia.

“We need all Sydneysiders to do the right thing and stay at home to stop the virus taking hold in the rest of Australia.”

Dr Khorshid said the State’s previous “gold standard” responses to outbreaks were no longer adequate because of the threat of the Delta variant of COVID-19.

“We don’t want to learn the hard way that this virus is very tricky, it’s getting ahead of us. That means being flexible, learning from past mistakes and from disasters in other countries.”

Dr Khorshid welcomed recent announcements of the Federal Government co-operating with Queensland and Western Australia in planning for purpose-built safe quarantine centres close to major airports and healthcare facilities.

Full transcript of Dr Khorshid’s comments to the media is [here](#):

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