

**Australian Medical Association Limited**  
**ABN 37 008 426 793**

Level 1, 39 Brisbane Avenue, Barton ACT 2600.  
 PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604  
 Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499  
 Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



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**AMA calls for release of health advice underpinning National Cabinet decision.**

The Australian Medical Association (AMA) has called for the release of medical and health advice that guided this afternoon’s National Cabinet’s decision, as it cautioned extra vigilance would be required from governments and the community to prevent infection from COVID-19 following the National Cabinet decision to reduce the COVID-positive isolation period from seven to five days.

AMA President, Professor Steve Robson said the health advice needed to be made public as the decision will mean many people re-entering the community after five days’ isolation will potentially still be infectious and pass the virus on.

“Throughout this pandemic the AMA has continuously said governments must base their decision-making on the health and medical advice and we need to see that advice and whether it supports today’s decision. If it doesn’t, the politicians need to explain themselves,” Professor Robson said.

“As many as 30 per cent of people are likely to still be infectious on days six and seven - even longer. When isolation rules change we need clear plans for protecting the vulnerable and careful monitoring, and if case numbers climb then the isolation rules should be re-evaluated.

“It’s now increasingly important people take protective measures including getting tested if you develop COVID symptoms and remain in isolation while awaiting the results.

“Additionally, everyone should be taking up the vaccine booster shots they’re eligible for and wear a mask wherever possible indoors when around other people. We also need to keep appropriate distances from people in indoor setting and continue hand sanitising and good hygiene practices.

“The move from seven to five days isolation will mean it is more important than ever for governments to ensure plans are in place to monitor and respond to outbreaks to protect Australians in vulnerable settings – such as those in aged care facilities.

“All governments should also take immediate and ongoing action to address the logjam in our public hospitals, which are suffering under extreme demand and staff shortages, further exacerbated by the number of COVID positive cases presenting.

“Governments should also continue public health messaging on the importance of community vigilance around COVID testing and isolation requirements, community spread and vaccine uptake,” Professor Robson said.

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CONTACT: AMA Media: +61 427 209 753 [media@ama.com.au](mailto:media@ama.com.au)

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