



# MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 28 May 2026

## In plain sight and never out of mind — national health crises can't be hidden

The AMA is disappointed by the government's decision to release its delayed responses to two significant inquiries behind a veil of distraction, and is concerned the move is indicative of further inaction on health crises facing Australia.

While eyes and ears were trained on the federal budget, the government chose Tuesday 12 May 2026 to publish its full responses to separate parliamentary inquiries into the impacts of online gambling and diabetes. A combined 1,773 days since the reports have been available.

The government published its response to the late Peta Murphy-led inquiry 'You win some, you lose more: Online gambling and its impacts on those experiencing gambling harm' 1,095 days after the committee tabled its report. And the response to the Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport inquiry, 'The State of Diabetes Mellitus in Australia in 2024' came after 678 days.

AMA President Dr Danielle McMullen said the timing of the government's final responses appeared to be a deliberate attempt to avoid media and public scrutiny, rather than acknowledge and respond to concerns that it is not doing enough to tackle these public health crises.

"More than three years ticked past before the government's final response to the gambling inquiry and it's been a similar length of time on the response to the diabetes crisis," Dr McMullen said.

"Despite that large window of opportunity, it chose to publish responses on a day when attention was focused on the budget, and many journalists would have been unable to access their response," said Dr McMullen.

"It seems the chief consideration has been avoiding accountability for not only the delay in publishing these responses but the content itself. While waiting for the government's response, Australians have suffered cumulative losses to the gambling industry of more than \$90 billion, and an estimated 2,500 lives have been lost to Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes."

The strength of the government's response to each inquiry falls short of meeting the respective committee's recommendations.

In April the government announced some limited reform measures around gambling, including partial restrictions on advertising, proposals to protect children and young people from exposure, limited strengthening of the industry's duty of care obligations, and an acknowledgement of the importance of support services. These reforms fall short of the full suite of recommendations in the Murphy report.

Dr McMullen said: "Gambling harms and the growing number of Australians with diabetes are worsening threats to public health in communities across the country. After waiting so long to hear the government's response, people deserve more reform and preventive actions, not just noting recommendations and acknowledgement of problems."

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“Gambling harms contribute to mental illness, suicide risk, family violence, and financial hardship but the government has failed to enact the committee’s central recommendations for a comprehensive ban on gambling advertising and establishing an independent national regulator.


“Similarly, the federal government supports many of the recommendations on diabetes but has still not committed to new and meaningful reforms. We need to see impactful prevention measures, including food labelling reform, restrictions on marketing to children, and our long campaigned for tax on sugar-sweetened beverages.”

The AMA is attending a preventive health roundtable, convened by Dr Sophie Scamps MP, at Parliament House today (Thursday, 28 May), which is focused on banning unhealthy food and drink marketing to children, and introducing a levy on sugar-sweetened beverages.

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