

Australian Medical Association Limited

ABN 37 008 426 793

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604
Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499
Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



**AMA WELCOMES REPORTS OF POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT ACTION
TO GET KIDS OFF NAURU**

The AMA is encouraged by media reports today that the Government is planning to have all asylum seeker children on Nauru relocated to Australia by the end of the year.

AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, said that the AMA would now like to see the Government publicly confirm the reports and release details of this welcome new policy approach.

“The AMA and a large number of other concerned health and social justice groups and individuals have been working hard for many years, and especially in recent months, to convince the Government to adopt a more humane approach to the health of refugees and asylum seekers,” Dr Bartone said.

“If the media reports are true, this is a very significant change in policy, but it cannot be a one-off.

“We need to see more details.

“We need to know if the families will be accompanying the children.

“And we need to see a legislated long-term policy to ensure that the health and wellbeing crises that occurred on Nauru never happen again – on Nauru or at any other centres run by the Australian Government.”

Dr Bartone wrote to Prime Minister Scott Morrison in September demanding that the Government move asylum seeker children and their families off Nauru to more appropriate settings for their deteriorating physical and mental health and wellbeing, preferably in Australia.

This was followed with significant lobbying of MPs and Senators across the political spectrum for short-term action and long-term solutions.

The AMA was also involved in lobbying activities with other groups at Parliament House throughout October.

Dr Bartone said the AMA still wants the Government to facilitate access to Nauru and other centres for a delegation of Australian medical professionals to assess the health and welfare of child refugees and asylum seekers.

“Membership of the delegation would be determined in consultation with the AMA and the delegation would make public the findings of its inspections and interviews to assure the Australian public that the Australian Government has done all that is possible to protect the health and wellbeing of asylum seekers and refugees,” Dr Bartone said.

1 November 2018

CONTACT: John Flannery

02 6270 5477 / 0419 494 761