

Claire McDonnell, Chief Executive Officer

Australasian Metabolic Health Society

E: claire@AMHS.org.au

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Dr Michael Wright

President, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Dear Michael,

Re: Strengthening the RACGP Handbook on the Management of Type 2 Diabetes – An Invitation to Collaborate

We write to you as Fellows of the RACGP and members of the Scientific Committee of the Australasian Metabolic Health Society (AMHS), with a shared commitment to ensuring Australia's 30,000 GPs have access to the most current, evidence-based tools to address the type 2 diabetes epidemic.

We are writing in the spirit of constructive partnership. We believe the RACGP is uniquely positioned to lead on this issue, and we would like to offer our committee's expertise to help strengthen the existing Management of Type 2 Diabetes: A Handbook for General Practice (the Handbook).

A timely opportunity to reflect emerging evidence

Since the Handbook's publication in late 2024, the evidence base for Therapeutic Carbohydrate Reduction (TCR) in the management and remission of type 2 diabetes has continued to strengthen. A 2025 systematic review (Das R, et al., *Cureus* 2025;17(9):e93340) reported remission rates of 62% at one year with TCR, a clinically significant finding that postdates the Handbook.

Remission of type 2 diabetes is now a stated goal of the National Diabetes Strategy 2021. Pleasingly, the Australasian Diabetes Society and Diabetes Australia recognised TCR in their 2023 joint position statement. The current Handbook, however, does not reflect this consensus: TCR receives approximately half a page in a 328-page document, and the section on remission does not include it as an option alongside low-calorie diets and bariatric surgery.

We appreciate the complexity of guideline development, and we understand that no handbook can instantly reflect every emerging publication. We are not writing to criticise the process. We are writing because we believe a targeted update to several key sections is now both warranted and achievable, and we would like to actively support that work.

Our specific concerns

In brief, we would draw the College's attention to three areas:

- The section on T2D remission does not include TCR alongside the other recognised modalities, which may inadvertently mislead GPs about the available options for their patients.
- The discussion of low-carbohydrate diets on page 115 references a Cochrane review that did not actually study low-carbohydrate diets as defined in current literature; the conclusions drawn are therefore potentially misleading when applied to TCR.
- The current authorship group may benefit from the involvement of clinicians with direct expertise in therapeutic carbohydrate reduction therapies to ensure balanced representation of the evidence.

A more detailed briefing paper setting out the evidence, including specific proposed edits to relevant handbook sections, is available for your review on request.

What we are proposing

We would welcome the opportunity to work constructively with the College, and make the following two requests:

1. That AMHS be invited into a formal consultation role in the next review cycle of this Handbook and future diabetes publications, with at least one FRACGP member of our Scientific Committee included in the authoring or advisory process.
2. That a targeted review of the TCR-related sections of the current Handbook be undertaken. Our committee is prepared to provide specific, referenced proposed edits for the College's consideration, at no cost, to assist this process.

We are mindful of the governance processes involved and are not seeking to bypass them instead we are offering to work within them. If it would be helpful, we would welcome a meeting with you or the relevant Handbook oversight committee to discuss a pathway forward.

Australia's GPs deserve a handbook that reflects the full range of evidence-based options available to their patients. We believe the RACGP shares that goal, and we look forward to the opportunity to contribute to it.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Laureen Lawlor-Smith

Deputy Chair, Australasian Metabolic Health Society

Professor Karen Dwyer

Chair, Australasian Metabolic Health Society

Dr Penny Figtree

Dr Liz Fraser,

Dr Lucy Burns

Dr Ron Schweitzer

Dr Louise Phillips

Dr Alex Petrushevski

Dr Deepa Mahananda

Dr Sanjeev Balakrishnan

Dr James Muecke

Members, AMHS Scientific Committee, on behalf of the Australasian Metabolic Health Society

Appendix: Email from Dr James Muecke AM, Australian of the Year 2020, to Dr Siân Goodson, 28 February 2025 (available on request)