**AMA SUPPORTS CONTACT TRACING APP AS IMPORTANT MEASURE TO CONTAIN COVID-19**

The AMA has put its support behind the Government’s contact tracing app to help contain the spread of COVID-19 in the Australian community.

AMA President, Dr Tony Bartone, said today that the AMA Federal Council on Friday voted to support the app.

“As a doctor, I’ll be downloading the contact tracing app, and I’ll be encouraging my patients, colleagues, family, and friends to do the same,” Dr Bartone said.

“The app simply automates a significant component of the current manual process of tracing who has come into contact with COVID-19.

“Contact tracing is currently a slow and labour-intensive process that is essential to slowing the spread of the virus.

“Speeding up contact tracing to slow the virus spreading will prevent illness and allow an earlier lifting of social distancing and other measures.

“It will enhance the ability to respond earlier to any identified new burst of activity and significantly contain hot spots.

“This is crucially important in giving us all confidence in managing our exit from the current restrictions, which the community has so admirably assisted with.

“We still have a very long way to go and the community will need to continue to play its part in that response, and the app will augment that community effort.

“Privacy, technical, and practical issues must be assured, and the inevitable challenges in the app’s rollout need to be anticipated and prevented.

“As Australia’s leading medical organisation, the AMA encourages use of the app as another crucial means of seeing off COVID-19.

“Signing up to the app is voluntary. We hope Australians will choose to get behind this app so that we can continue to fight COVID-19 and give people some more freedom to get on with their day to day lives,” Dr Bartone said.

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