

27 February 2019

Apply for a *Kellion Victory Medal* today

Diabetes Victoria invites all Victorian residents who have lived with diabetes for 50 years or more to apply for the 2019 *Kellion Victory Medal*. Applications received by Friday 31 May 2019 will be considered for the *Kellion Victory Medal* award ceremony during National Diabetes Week in July 2019.

Less than 100 years ago, type 1 diabetes was a death sentence: half of the people who developed the condition died within two years and more than 90% were dead within five years.¹ Thanks to the introduction of insulin therapy in the 1920s, and numerous advances since then, the long-term outlook for those with type 1 diabetes has dramatically improved over the decades.²

Celebrating this outstanding achievement, Diabetes Victoria has been presenting Kellion Victory Medals since 1984. "There is no cure yet for type 1 diabetes; however, recent changes and improvements in diabetes management and technology are astounding. Equally as astounding are the determination, resilience, focus and courage that all *Kellion Victory Medallists* have shown during their long lives with diabetes," says Diabetes Victoria CEO Craig Bennett. "All recipients deserve our utmost respect and admiration."

Diabetes management has indeed come a long way since 2018 *Kellion Victory Medallist* Diana Snape was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at age 11 in 1948. "I am amazed I survived those early years. There was no support at all and no social awareness of the condition," Diana remembers.

People with type 1 diabetes need to take insulin via injections or an insulin pump every day for the rest of their lives. They have to check their blood glucose levels multiple times every day because their immune system mistakenly attacked and destroyed the cells in the pancreas that make insulin. Insulin is needed to get blood sugar (glucose) into cells for energy. Without insulin, glucose builds up in the bloodstream, this damages cells and tissues throughout the body over time.

Diabetes Victoria celebrates *Kellion Victory Medallists* at a special award ceremony during National Diabetes Week in July. Alternatively, there are other options available to receive your medal. Diabetes Victoria also acknowledges the involvement of support people and the effect they have on the health and wellbeing of people living with diabetes. These support people are eligible for Carers Certificates which recognise years of love, dedication and support by a carer.

If you or someone you know may be eligible for a *Kellion Victory Medal*, please contact Diabetes Victoria today to complete an application. Visit diabetesvic.org.au/kellion for an application form or contact us via phone 1300 437 386 or email: kellion@diabetesvic.org.au

¹ Source: Harvard Health Publications.

² An Australian study has found that diabetes results in a modest reduction in life expectancy (3.1 years for women and 3.2 years for men) and a substantial reduction in disability-free life expectancy (9.1 years for women, 8.2 years for men) in Australian adults. Source: Huo L et al. (2016). Burden of diabetes in Australia: life expectancy and disability-free life expectancy in adults with diabetes. *Diabetologia*, July 2016, Volume 59, Issue 7, pp1437-1445.



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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About *Kellion Victory Medals*

Kellion Victory Medals honour the lives of people who have lived with diabetes for many decades – which is an outstanding achievement. Australia's *Kellion Victory Medal* was named in honour of the late Mr Claude Kellion AM, a Sydney businessman who established a foundation to promote diabetes research after his son died, aged 38, from diabetes complications.

Kellion Victory Medals have been awarded since 1984 in Australia. All Australians who have lived with diabetes for 50 years or more are eligible for a *Kellion Victory Medal*.

We **support, empower** and **campaign for** all Victorians living with, or affected by, diabetes.

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