

EMBARGOED UNTIL 7pm Thursday 13 November 2014

Victorian researchers perform well in \$3.5m grant round World Diabetes Day – Friday 14 November

Diabetes Australia – Vic has announced the Victorian recipients of the 2015 Diabetes Australia Research Program grants on the eve of World Diabetes Day at a special function in Federation Square.

Australia-wide, there were fifty-two research projects chosen for 2015, supported by total funding of \$3.5 million. Victorian researchers received 23 grants in this year's round, almost half of the total.

The prestigious Millennium Type 2 Diabetes Grant of \$150,000 has been awarded to a Victorian team led by Dr Gwyneth Rees Principal Investigator, Behavioural Research in Ophthalmology at the Centre for Eye Research Australia.

Dr Rees and colleagues will trial a new evidence-based personalised eye consultation intervention for people with diabetes and early stage eye damage who are struggling to manage their blood glucose and are at risk of vision loss.

Over a quarter of people with type 2 diabetes have diabetic retinopathy and it's currently the major cause of preventable blindness and vision loss in Australia.

"The consultations will help people to understand their retinal scans and the changes happening in their eyes. We expect this to motivate better management of blood glucose and reduce their risk of vision loss." said Dr Rees.

Diabetes Australia – Vic CEO Craig Bennett said that wonderful generosity of Australians has made it possible to provide such an impressive amount of funding for diabetes research. "Researchers awarded these 2015 Diabetes Australia grants are doing timely and important work in Australia right now, given that diabetes is on track to become the number one burden of disease in this country within the next few years."

This year, 100,000 Australians were diagnosed with diabetes. World-wide, almost 400 million people are living with diabetes which will increase to 600 million by 2035.

The 2014 World Diabetes Day's theme is Healthy Living and Diabetes. Across Australia this evening, a number of iconic buildings have been lit up in blue – the colour of the International Diabetes Federation – to reflect the power of the global diabetes movement to alter the diabetes landscape.

About the Diabetes Australia Research Program

Established by Diabetes Australia in 1987, the program supports and develops diabetes research in Australia by providing funding towards the prevention, management and cure of diabetes. The program has a particular focus on enabling and fostering young and upcoming diabetes researchers.

Support for the Diabetes Australia Research Program

Diabetes Australia Research Program funding applications were up again this year. We rely on the generosity and support of our member organisations, trusts and foundations, as well as special sponsorship from Underworks Socks and individual donors to fund this important research.

Diabetes Australia – Vic is a leading member organisation of Diabetes Australia and a major contributor to the national research program – this year providing \$1.2 million.

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