

## **Diabetes Australia marks World Diabetes Day with inaugural Diabetes: “State of the Nation” Report**

To mark World Diabetes Day (14 November) Diabetes Australia has released a new “State of the Nation” report documenting policy and funding action by both the federal and state/territory Governments.

Diabetes Australia CEO A/Professor Greg Johnson said it was important to assess Australia’s progress in responding to the challenges of the diabetes epidemic.

“It is one year since the federal Minister for Health, Hon Sussan Ley, released the Australian National Diabetes Strategy 2016 – 2020 and this report sets out the various specific actions that Governments have taken over the past year to address the very serious epidemic of diabetes – arguably the single biggest challenge confronting our health system in the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” A/Professor Johnson said.

“There have been some very important and positive steps taken by the federal Government and some States but we are still waiting for a comprehensive implementation plan to be put together by the strategy’s Implementation Working Group which is comprised of representatives of federal, state and territory governments reporting to the Australian Health Ministers’ Advisory Council.

“Without a comprehensive implementation plan, and without clear responsibilities being developed for coordinated action, we risk the National Diabetes Strategy being another good plan that fails in the implementation.”

Professor Stephen Colagiuri, Professor of Metabolic Health and Director of the Boden Institute and a member of the National Diabetes Strategy Advisory Group, said it was important all levels of Government implemented measures to help prevent the development of type 2 diabetes.

“The only way to halt the diabetes epidemic is to prevent people developing type 2 diabetes,” Professor Colagiuri said.

“We know how to do this through modest lifestyle changes but we need definitive government leadership and action to improve the food and physical activity environment to help people make the necessary changes.”

Professor Paul Zimmet, Professor of Diabetes at Monash University and co-chair of the National Diabetes Strategy Advisory Group said more needed to be done to prevent the development of type 2 diabetes in children and adolescents.

“Over the last decade we have seen the number of children and adolescents diagnosed with type 2 diabetes continue to grow and this is very concerning,” Professor Zimmet said.

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# MEDIA RELEASE



“In terms of prevention, the national strategy called on governments to address the importance of maternal and child health, particularly preconception, during pregnancy and the first few years of life as potential measures to stem the epidemic.”

Diabetes Australia President Hon Judi Moylan AO co-chaired the Advisory Group that provided extensive input into the new national strategy.

“The Advisory Group never expected the entire strategy to be acted upon in the first year,” Ms Moylan said.

“Clearly, we need to see continued action with new policies, new programs and new funding applied each year over the five year strategy – and we encourage the intergovernmental working group formed by AHMAC to release a comprehensive plan for getting on with coordinated action over the remaining years of the strategy.”

The new report also updates the growth and impact of the diabetes epidemic in the past year, noting that:

- 100,105 Australians were diagnosed with diabetes in the past year
- 1,211,251 Australians are currently living with diabetes
- Around one third of all these people will develop diabetic retinopathy and damage to their eyes
- 36,198 women diagnosed with gestational diabetes in the past year
- 383,439 Australians with diabetes needed insulin injections every day (or insulin pump therapy).
- an estimated 250,000 to 500,000 have undiagnosed, silent type 2 diabetes
- an estimated 2 million Australians have pre-diabetes and are therefore at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes
- 4400 diabetes related amputations of toes, feet or limbs have been performed
- 3500 people with diabetes needed kidney dialysis
- 840,000 hospitalisations related to diabetes

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