

**For embargo until 19 April 2017**

## **Diabetes Australia supports new research that may pave the way for a cure for type 1 diabetes**

Associate Professor Stuart Mannering, a global leader in diabetes research, is hoping he can discover a therapy that will ‘turn-off’ the immune response that may cause type 1 diabetes.

Diabetes Australia today announced the prestigious 2017 Millennium Award for Type 1 Diabetes to Associate Professor Mannering for his work at St Vincent’s Institute of Medical Research. The Award provides funding of \$150,000.

Diabetes Australia also announced the 2017 Millennium Award for Type 2 diabetes which goes to Dr Seth Masters from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research who will be able to continue his research into how the immune system contributes to obesity, associated with the development of type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes Australia CEO A/Professor Greg Johnson said Diabetes Australia is committed to funding research into all types of diabetes to discover new therapies and treatments to help Australia respond to the diabetes epidemic.

“Further research into all types of diabetes is essential. The Diabetes Australia Millennium Awards provide significant funding to world leading researchers working on projects that will help us understand fundamental questions like what causes type 1 diabetes and type 2 diabetes,” A/Professor Johnson said.

“The holy grail of diabetes research is a cure and we will continue to invest in research until that becomes a reality. We have some of the world’s best diabetes researchers – but they need our support with funding and other assistance.”

Associate Professor Stuart Mannering said he hoped his research would pave the way for a vaccine to prevent people from developing type 1 diabetes.

“We are looking at the specific immune responses that we think trigger type 1 diabetes,” Associate Professor Mannering said.

“At this stage we have identified a particular molecule, ‘C-peptide’, which may trigger an immune response that leads to the development of type 1 diabetes. “

“We are looking at ways of developing a blood test that could alert us to this immune response at work which could then lead us to developing a vaccine.”

**For information:**

Liam Ferney, Diabetes Australia – 0448 130 925  
[lferney@diabetesaustralia.com.au](mailto:lferney@diabetesaustralia.com.au)

Dr Seth Masters from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, said his research was focussed on immune signals that can fight obesity, and help to prevent people from developing type 2 diabetes.

“The immune system can detect when an individual is becoming obese, and sends signals to try and stop this from happening. We think that the body becomes resistant to these signals, increasing the risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes,” Dr Masters said.

“My research is looking into how the immune system detects persistent excess food intake and then how molecules made by immune cells can keep fat levels in a normal range.”

“If we can understand how these immune molecules deplete fat stores, then we may be able to use them safely to treat obesity and prevent type 2 diabetes.”

The Millennium Grants are part of a suite of research projects Diabetes Australia funds through the Diabetes Australia Research Program. In 2017 the Diabetes Australia Research Program funded 50 new research grants across all types of diabetes.

*The Diabetes Australia Research Program was established in 1987 to support and develop diabetes related research across Australia. The program provides funding towards the prevention, management and cure of all types of diabetes, as well as enabling and fostering young and upcoming researchers in the field of diabetes research.*

*Diabetes Australia is celebrating 30 years of ongoing support for important diabetes research through the Diabetes Australia Research Program.*

**For information:**

Liam Ferney, Diabetes Australia – 0448 130 925  
[lferney@diabetesaustralia.com.au](mailto:lferney@diabetesaustralia.com.au)