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New Diabetes Australia campaign compares fear of getting type 2 diabetes with fear of sharks and spiders

Diabetes Australia's latest campaign aims to compare Australians' fears of sharks, spiders and scary clowns with the threat of type 2 diabetes.

A new Newspoll survey shows that nearly 80 per cent of Australians don't think they are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes despite evidence that over 2 million Australians already have pre-diabetes and are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes Australia CEO Professor Greg Johnson said that the threat of developing type 2 diabetes is very real. "What many people don't realise is that type 2 diabetes doesn't just affect older people or those who are overweight or obese. Type 2 diabetes can affect anyone. It is a serious and complex condition. Many people don't take the type 2 diabetes risk seriously."

Professor Johnson highlighted that there is also good news. "If people do the risk test and find that they are at high risk, we can do something about it, we can offer type 2 diabetes prevention programs that may prevent or delay type 2 diabetes in up to 60 per cent of cases through sustained lifestyle modification – losing weight, eating a healthy diet and exercising more," he said.

Minister for Health David Davis said the Victorian Coalition Government supports a range of programs aimed at addressing the diabetes risk factors of unhealthy eating, physical inactivity and obesity.

"We support the *Life!* diabetes and cardiovascular disease prevention program delivered by Diabetes Australia – Vic."

"The program aims to help Victorians at high risk of type 2 diabetes and cardio-vascular disease to adopt a healthier lifestyle and dramatically reduce their risk.

The new *You think this is scary?* campaign uses strong images to make Australians reassess what they consider a personal threat. View the premiere of the campaign community service announcement: bit.ly/NDW14CSA. Download the CSA here: <http://tbf.me/a/BLsNQV>

The Gruen Transfer commentator Dan Gregory, who has type 2 diabetes, said that fear campaigns work. "Fear is one of the most powerful motivators when it comes to human behaviour, the problem is, our fears often don't reflect reality. You think this is scary? sets out to challenge our fears and remind us that type 2 diabetes is something we really should be more concerned about." **-more-**

For interview:

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We know that the number of people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes is scary. The number of people diagnosed every day is scary, but the financial burden on the health system is equally frightening.

Health economist at the Centre for Health Policy, School of Population and Global Health at the University of Melbourne, Professor Philip Clarke said that the burden of diabetes isn't just a personal one – the economic effects are huge. “The health care costs of a person with diabetes is between \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year which is considerably higher than those of the average Australian. By preventing and treating type 2 diabetes now, many more Australians will live to see their grandkids.”

Diabetes Australia is the national body for people affected by all types of diabetes and those at risk, and is committed to reducing the impact of diabetes working in partnership with consumers, health professionals and researchers.

About the campaign: Diabetes Australia's campaign exposes that the real threat to Australians is their risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Australians can visit the campaign website to check their risk at www.checkmyrisk.org.au or call 1300 136 588 for further information about diabetes. They can also spread the word and encourage friends and family to take the risk test by using the hashtag #NDW14 on social media. Campaign imagery, in-depth case studies and further information is also available on the website.

About the research: According to a recent Newspoll survey, nearly 77 per cent of Australians don't think they are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes in the next few years, 7.3 per cent already know they have diabetes and 13.8 per cent recognise they will probably develop type 2 diabetes in the next few years.

Localise the campaign:

- View case studies throughout Australia at: www.checkmyrisk.org.au/case-studies and get in touch with your [local state or territory branch](#) of Diabetes Australia for interview.
- Find prevalence rates at a national, federal electorate, state electorate, local government and postcode level at: <http://www.ndss.com.au/en/Research/Australian-Diabetes-Map/>

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