

Media release

5 June 2014

GPs better equipped than ever to curb the alarming epidemic of type 2 diabetes in Australia

As more Australians are diagnosed with diabetes than ever before, GPs and their practice teams are now better equipped to manage the alarming epidemic of type 2 diabetes in Australia following the release of the latest edition of [General practice management of type 2 diabetes 2014–15](#).

Assistant Health Minister, Hon. Fiona Nash, will today launch the latest edition of the guidelines designed to assist GPs more effectively diagnose and manage diabetes, produced by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) in partnership with Diabetes Australia.

Type 2 diabetes is the fastest growing chronic disease in Australia, with more than 200 Australians developing type 2 diabetes every day. GPs are the first point of call for many Australians experiencing health concerns and are in the best position to manage this alarming epidemic.

At the current rate of growth, it is estimated the number of people in Australia with type 2 diabetes will increase from around 950,000 today to over 2.5 million in 20 years¹, with the socially disadvantaged twice as likely to develop the disease.

RACGP President, Dr Liz Marles, said more than 83% of the Australian population sees a GP at least once a year, placing Australian GPs at the forefront of prevention, diagnosis and the systematic management of this serious and complex condition.

“It is possible to prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes through the implementation of simple lifestyle changes such as maintaining a healthy weight through a nutritious diet and increased activity.

“If left undiagnosed or poorly managed, type 2 diabetes can have serious health implications including blindness, limb amputation, kidney disease, heart attacks, stroke and early death.

“Early detection and optimal management of patients with the disease is critically linked to improved health outcomes and ultimately, survival.”

“These guidelines are a vital resource for GPs, providing up-to-date information and recommendations on how best to prevent and manage type 2 diabetes in the general practice setting,” said Dr Marles.

The guidelines represent an 18-year successful partnership between the RACGP and Diabetes Australia and focuses on factors relevant to current Australian clinical practice.

¹ Shaw J, Tanamas S, eds. Diabetes: the silent pandemic and its impact on Australia. Melbourne: Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute, 2012.

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Diabetes Australia CEO, Professor Greg Johnson said the new guidelines are an important tool for GPs and their practice teams.

“The Government has recently committed to developing a new National Diabetes Strategy to strengthen the prevention and management of diabetes within the primary healthcare sector.

“This is important step towards a more urgent response to the epidemic of type 2 diabetes. We have under-estimated the serious impact of this disease for too long,” said Professor Johnson.

The guidelines provide an accessible summary of best practice, evidence-based advice on dealing with type 2 diabetes patients across the spectrum, from identifying at-risk patients through to end of life care for patients.

The guidelines are based on a patient-centered approach that is respectful and responsive to individual patient preferences and supportive of self-management. It includes new chapters on multimorbidity, clinical governance and end of life care as well as additional tools and templates.

The guidelines are available for free download on the [RACGP](#) and [Diabetes Australia](#) websites. Copies of the guidelines will also be distributed to members of the RACGP and Australian Diabetes Educators Association, as well as endocrinologists and diabetes-related physicians.

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Media contacts

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About the RACGP

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) is Australia’s largest professional general practice organisation and represents urban and rural general practitioners. We represent over 26,000 members working in or towards a career in general practice and are proud that over 22,000 Australian-registered general practitioners have chosen to be a member of the College. There are over 125 million general practice consultations taking place annually in Australia. Visit www.racgp.org.au.

The RACGP recognises the traditional custodians of land and sea, on whose lands we work and live. We wish to pay our respects to all Traditional Owners and Elders past, present and future.

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About Diabetes Australia

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.

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