



Let's Prevent Diabetes Campaign Q&A

What is the aim of the campaign?

The Let's Prevent Diabetes campaign is a call to action. It's about calling on federal and state governments across the country to fund a national type 2 diabetes prevention program for Australians at high risk.

It is also a grassroots campaign encouraging all Australians to support us in our call to government.

For decades governments have prevented road accidents through the requirement of seat belts, prevented head injuries thorough the requirement of helmets and prevented drownings through the requirement of life jackets.

They have spent hundreds of millions of dollars on these prevention programs. The death toll across Australia from diabetes and causes related to diabetes is more than all of these combined – around 7500 every year.

But when it comes to type 2 diabetes, where we know we can prevent this serious condition for those at high risk, we have no national approach.

In 2010-11, 315 people died after drowning in Australia
In 2011, 1292 people died on Australian roads
In 2006-07, 1131 cyclists suffered a head injury on Australian roads
In 2007, 7500 people died from diabetes (type 1 and type 2) and diabetes complications

We know type 2 diabetes is largely preventable, so why don't we try?

We want all Tasmanians to back our calls. We want people with diabetes, their families, friends and work colleagues, as well as MPs, councils and others to add their voice to our campaign by visiting www.letspreventdiabetes.org.au from Sunday 8 July 2012.

Why focus on diabetes prevention?

In Australia alone 275 people develop diabetes every day- in Tasmania, 6 develop type 2 diabetes daily. It is the pandemic of the 21st century.

1. Department of Infrastructure and Transport (Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics) *Road Deaths Australia: Monthly Bulletin* December 2011 http://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/2012/files/RDA_1211.pdf 2. Royal Life Saving Society Australia. *National Drowning Report 2011* http://www.royallifesaving.com.au/resources/documents/DrowningReport_2011_LR.pdf 3. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. *Serious injury due to land transport accidents, Australia 2006-07*, <http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6442458863> 4. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. *Diabetes Impacts* <http://www.aihw.gov.au/diabetes/impacts/>

There are an estimated 2 million Australian adults, or 45,000 Tasmanians, who have pre-diabetes and are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Research shows that most people do not think diabetes is a serious illness and underestimate their personal risk.

What does Diabetes Tasmania want governments to do?

Currently, the type 2 prevention programs available in Australia are very limited. Victoria is the only state with a program (which is funded by the state government) for people aged over 50. That is far from enough.

We want type 2 diabetes prevention programs to be available in every state for the 2 million Australians at high risk. We also want systematic risk assessments for people over 40.

With type 2 diabetes set to become the leading burden of disease in Australia by 2017, it's time for governments in this country to work together make diabetes prevention a priority.

We want federal and state governments to come together and fund a powerful and proven national type 2 diabetes prevention program to give an estimated 2 million high-risk Australians the best chance of preventing this life-threatening condition.

It is estimated the program would cost \$580 million over the next four years, saving up to \$1.37 billion in healthcare costs.

A national prevention system for people at high risk of type 2 diabetes would include:

- A national training program to train and certify health professionals in type 2 diabetes prevention
- Establishment of accredited prevention course provider organisations to provide prevention courses
- Establishment a National Riskline (like the Quitline) to support Australians wanting to understand their risk and participate in prevention courses
- Social marketing and communication campaign to help people understand the seriousness and risks of type 2 diabetes and create urgency and a strong call to action for people to participate in a prevention course

What will a national type 2 diabetes prevention program achieve?

We know that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed through lifestyle intervention.

Numerous international trials have demonstrated that we can prevent the progression from pre-diabetes to type 2 diabetes by using lifestyle behaviour change programs. This approach to type 2 diabetes prevention has been shown to be even more effective than drug treatment in clinical trials.

The US Diabetes Prevention Program demonstrated that 58 per cent of cases of type 2 diabetes can be prevented. Therefore, if 1,257,245 individuals participate in a national diabetes prevention program over four years and assuming 58 per cent of cases will be prevented, 729,202 cases of type 2 diabetes will be prevented or delayed.

Based on the Life! program currently being delivered in Victoria, if 1,257,245 individuals participate in a national diabetes prevention program over three years and assuming 37 per cent of cases will be prevented, 465,181 cases of type 2 diabetes will be prevented or delayed.

What can people do to support the campaign?

1. Come along and show your support for a national diabetes prevention program and assess your level of risk at the Tasmanian launches of the Let's Prevent Diabetes campaign:

At 12.30 pm Monday 9 July 2012 - Hobart
Elizabeth Street Mall

At 11.00 am on Tuesday 10 July 2012 - Launceston
Brisbane Street Mall

2. Visit www.letspreventdiabetes.org.au (from 8 July 2012) and add your voice to our campaign.

On this website you are asked to back our calls by answering yes to a simple question and writing to your local MPs. Don't forget to send the link to your friends, families, workmates, schools, councils and everyone in between – the more people who visit our website the stronger our chance of getting governments to work together and take action.

Why is the campaign important for people with pre-diabetes?

Around 2 million Australians have pre-diabetes and are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes –we want to reduce that number, but we can't do it alone.

What is pre-diabetes?

Impaired fasting glucose (IFG) and impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) are conditions where blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough for a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. The term 'pre-diabetes' is often used to describe these conditions.

People with pre-diabetes have a high risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Why is the campaign important for people with type 2 diabetes?

We need people with type 2 diabetes to be our biggest voice. You have been diagnosed with diabetes so you know how it affects your life.

If you had been shown the impact that diabetes would have on your life before you were diagnosed, we know it would have helped motivate you to do something to reduce your chances of developing it.

That's what we want governments across the country to do – get serious about the most serious threat to Australians' health and productivity and fund a national diabetes prevention program for those at high risk.

What is type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes occurs when a person's insulin is not working effectively (insulin resistance) or their pancreas does not produce sufficient insulin, or a combination of both.

Type 2 diabetes:

- Represents 85–90 per cent of all cases of diabetes
- Usually develops in adults over the age of 45 years but is increasingly occurring at a younger age
- Is more likely to develop in people with a family history or from particular ethnic backgrounds
- Symptoms may be similar to those for type 1 diabetes. Other symptoms can include:
frequent infections (thrush, urinary tract or skin infections) and slow wound healing.

Many people with type 2 diabetes do not have any symptoms.

For some people the first indication of diabetes coincides with a complication of diabetes such as a heart attack, foot ulcer or stroke.

It can be managed with a healthy lifestyle and regular medical checks in the early stages, but eventually medications and/or insulin may be required. It is estimated that after 7–10 years of having diabetes, 60 per cent of people will require insulin.

Who is at risk of developing type 2 diabetes?

- People with pre-diabetes
- People who are inactive
- People who have a family history of type 2 diabetes
- People who are overweight or obese
- People with high blood pressure and/or abnormal fats or a history of cardiovascular disease

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People from certain ethnic backgrounds
- Women who have had diabetes during pregnancy (gestational diabetes)
- Women with polycystic ovarian syndrome and are overweight
- Smokers
- People taking antipsychotic medication

Can type 2 diabetes be prevented?

Yes. Prevention in those at high risk is **proven, possible and powerful**.

Can people prevent type 1 diabetes?

Type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented.

What is AUSDRISK?

The AUSDRISK (Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool) was developed in 2008 as part of an Australian Government health initiative aimed at preventing type 2 diabetes, raising awareness of and detecting undiagnosed type 2 diabetes.

What does the AUSDRISK do?

The tool assesses a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes within the next five years, based on a score for risk factors such as age, gender, country of birth, family history of diabetes, history of high blood pressure, smoking status, fruit and vegetable intake, physical activity levels and waist circumference.

Those with a score of 12 or more are encouraged to speak to their GP.

Refer to the Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment test at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/diabetesRiskassessmentTool> or www.diabetesqld.org.au.

What about people with type 1 diabetes? Why should they support the campaign?

We all know that there are differences and links between type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

However, the impact of the condition on individuals and our community does not differentiate and there is an overall need for a national type 2 diabetes prevention program funded and supported by all governments.

We need your help to make this happen.

While type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented, an estimated 60 per cent of type 2 diabetes cases can be prevented. We need people with type 1 diabetes to support

the campaign by jumping online and voting for governments to take action and fund a national type 2 diabetes prevention program.

We need them to keep up the conversation on Facebook and Twitter and support all people with diabetes.

Remember that National Diabetes Week is about raising awareness of diabetes. This year's message is about the prevention of type 2 diabetes, while in November, World Diabetes Day focuses on supporting all people with diabetes.

How is the Let's Prevent Diabetes campaign funded?

This campaign is funded by Diabetes Australia's member organisations and Novo Nordisk.

Diabetes Tasmania is a member of Diabetes Australia, and is the peak body for diabetes in Tasmania. It is our responsibility to champion the needs of all individuals living with diabetes and all those at risk of developing diabetes.

Let's Prevent Diabetes

www.letspreventdiabetes.org.au