



# NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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## Half the 1.2 million Australians living with diabetes don't know it

Complications can affect the heart, kidneys, eyes, nervous system and circulation. It is one of the top ten underlying causes of death in Australia- it's diabetes and 600,000 Australians don't even know they have it.

Australian Divisions of General Practice Chair Dr Jenny Thomson said during National Diabetes Week anyone who has symptoms, or are at risk of developing diabetes should visit their GP and be tested.

"People who are obese, inactive, have a poor diet or have a family history are at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, if they don't already suffer from it.

"We've seen a three fold increase in the number of adults with diabetes since the early 1980s, that's a frightening statistic. It's important to act now to drastically reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes," Dr Thomson said.

Sensible weight management and physical activity help prevent Type 2 diabetes. GPs can inform patients about how to reduce their risks of developing diabetes as well as diagnosing and treating the condition.

Not being diagnosed or failing to manage the condition can have significant consequences such as amputations, erectile dysfunction and blindness.

There is no cure for diabetes but it's a condition that can be managed effectively by medication, a healthy lifestyle and regular medical checks.

ADGP CEO Kate Carnell said the divisions of general practice aim to provide an integrated approach to primary health care and diabetes is a great example of a condition that benefits greatly from a team-based approach.

"Your GP can put together a care plan including other health professionals, for example referring diabetic patients to podiatrists and dieticians," Ms Carnell said.

Divisions across Australia are integral in the fight against diabetes by organising GP education, conducting practice support visits, raising awareness of diabetes in the community, providing services to patients and assisting practices to set up recall and reminder systems to provide evidence based management of diabetic patients.

**For more information please call Kate Carnell, ADGP Chief Executive Officer, on 0415 662 266**

### WHAT IS ADGP?

- ADGP is the peak body representing 119 Divisions of General Practice and eight State-based organisations (SBOs) around Australia. The Divisions Network supports general practice and their practice teams and drives the implementation of innovative health strategies.
- ADGP, through the Divisions Network, works to integrate general practice with other sectors of the health system, both government and non-government, to deliver high quality care to the Australian community.
- ADGP is committed to promoting the health of all Australians by supporting the role of Divisions in the nation's primary health care system.



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