MEDIA RELEASE

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Nation’s largest diabetes conversation

Federal Minister for Health Sussan Ley is calling on Australians to have their say as part of the nation’s largest conversation about the best ways to prevent, treat and cure diabetes.

Ms Ley today announced the opening of a national consultation process to help guide the Abbott Government’s development of a National Diabetes Strategy – an election commitment.

Ms Ley said diabetes affected the lives of most people in some way, shape or form and this was a critical opportunity for all Australians to participate in finding the best ways to prevent, treat and cure this rapidly growing national problem at https://consultations.health.gov.au.

“Over one million Australians are now living with diabetes, while hundreds of thousands more are either at high risk of contracting the disease or are living with it and don’t know,” Ms Ley said.

“However, diabetes doesn’t just affect the lives of those who have it. It takes a heavy toll on their family and friends, their job, the sustainability of the health budget and our national prosperity.

“For example, the overall cost of diabetes to the Australian economy is estimated to be as high as $14 billion annually.

“That’s why it’s so important we get a broad diversity of views. Whether you’re a carer, parent, employer, doctor, researcher or someone living with the disease, we want to hear your views, experiences and ideas about addressing this rapidly growing national problem.”

Ms Ley said there were over 200 new cases of diabetes diagnosed in Australia every day.

“Diabetes also contributes to a range of other serious health burdens, including heart attacks, strokes, amputation, blindness, kidney failure, depression and nerve disease, which is why this government is committed to delivering a National Diabetes Strategy,” Ms Ley said.

“This national strategy will aim to prioritise Australia’s response to diabetes; identify the best approaches to addressing the impact of diabetes in the community; and position Australia as an international leader in diabetes prevention, management and research.”

Comments received through this consultation will inform the National Diabetes Strategy, due for release late 2015. Consultation will close Friday May 17.

Ms Ley thanked the National Diabetes Strategy Advisory Group for their work, including developing a consultation paper to help generate public discussion and ideas and is available at https://consultations.health.gov.au.

(see over page)
The call for public feedback follows face-to-face consultations held last year in Melbourne, Canberra, Perth, Brisbane, Sydney, Alice Springs and Hobart.

The National Diabetes Strategy Advisory Group is co-chaired by the Hon. Judi Moylan and Professor Paul Zimmet AO and supported by a range of health, community and economic experts.

**Additional Facts and Figures:**
- **Type 2 diabetes** is the most common form of diabetes, accounting for approximately 85 per cent of people with diabetes.
- **Diabetes** is underlying or associated cause of one in every ten deaths in Australia.
- **Healthcare** that is directly attributable to diabetes costs approximately $1.7 billion per year, while the total cost of diabetes annually has been estimated to be as high as $14 billion.
- **Annual direct costs for people with diabetes complications** are more than twice as much as for people without complications; $9,600 compared with $3,500.
- **It is estimated** that for every 100 people with a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes in Australia, at least another 25 may be living with undiagnosed type 2 diabetes.
- **Obesity** is considered a major cause of diabetes. At present, 63 per cent of Australian adults over the age of 18 are overweight or obese, as are approximately 25 per cent of children aged between 5 and 17, and these rates are even higher among people from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

**Examples of the annual impact of diabetes on Australia’s health**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospitalisations</td>
<td>840,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiovascular and/or kidney disease</td>
<td>623,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision loss</td>
<td>95,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End stage kidney disease</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower-limb amputations</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Source: National Diabetes Strategy Advisory Group Consultation Paper*

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