MEDIA RELEASE

28 May 2015

**Diabetes Australia awards $3.5m in research grants to leading Australian diabetes researchers**

Through the Diabetes Australia Research Program, Diabetes NSW announces grants worth $1.1 million to 17 researchers in NSW

NSW Minister for Health the Hon. Jillian Skinner this evening (Thursday 28 May) presented 17 researchers in NSW with new Diabetes Australia grants at NSW Parliament House, worth more than $1.1 million.

Fifty-one research projects were chosen for 2015 across Australia, bringing the total Diabetes Australia Research Program commitment to more than $3.5 million for this year.

Seventeen NSW diabetes researchers were awarded a Diabetes Australia Research Program grant in the 2015 round, including the prestigious **Millennium Award** for Type 1 Research, awarded to Diabetes NSW Board member Dr Bruce King, based at the John Hunter Children’s Hospital. Dr King was awarded the Millennium Award of $150,000 for research into an Australian artificial pancreas algorithm for announced and unannounced meals.

**GENERAL RESEARCH GRANTS**

Established in 1987, the Diabetes Australia Research Program supports and develops the field of diabetes research in Australia. The program funds research towards the prevention and management of diabetes or the cure for diabetes. The program also fosters young and upcoming diabetes researchers.

Australia-wide there were forty-nine general grants of up to $60,000 each awarded in 2015. As well as Dr Bruce King’s receipt of the Millennium Award (Type 1), NSW researchers received 16 of these grants.
Speaking at the event, Mrs Skinner said that research into diabetes is crucial. “With the increasing prevalence of diabetes in Australia and worldwide, we need to find better ways of managing and preventing diabetes, and work towards finding a cure.”

“The Diabetes Australia Research Program provides a vital contribution into this important field,” she said.

Research topics supported by the 2015 Research grants include islet transplantation as a strategy to restore normal glucose levels in people with Type 1 diabetes, a pilot study into the effect of brown fat on blood glucose levels, pinpointing the precise mechanisms by which exercise benefits diabetes prevention, and the use of laser treatment for diabetic retinopathy, among others.

Diabetes NSW Chairman Leo Tutt said that research is essential for creating a future without diabetes and its complications. “We are very fortunate in Australia to have the means and the drive to support this invaluable research and look forward to the results contributing to real changes for people living with or at risk of diabetes,” he said.

About the Diabetes Australia Research Program

Diabetes Australia supports and develops diabetes research in Australia through providing funding towards the prevention, management and cure of diabetes, as well as enabling and fostering young and upcoming researchers in diabetes research.

Support the Diabetes Australia Research Program

Diabetes Australia’s Research Program relies on the generosity and support of Australians, our member organisations, of trusts and foundations, and philanthropic donations. Any individual or organisation can support the Diabetes Australia Research Program. To start a regular donation, or find out more, call 1800 800 977 or email research@diabetesaustralia.com.au

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Available for interview:

• NSW Minister for Health and Minister for Medical Research the Hon. Jillian Skinner, MP
• Leo Tutt, Chairman, Diabetes NSW
• Dr Bruce King, Diabetes NSW Board member, Staff Specialist, Paediatric Endocrinology, at John Hunter Hospital and Conjoint Senior Lecturer at the University School of Medicine and Public Health.
• Adjunct Prof Greg Johnson, CEO, Diabetes Australia

About Diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic disease which occurs when your body either does not make insulin or when the insulin it does make is in insufficient quantities or does not work properly. This leads to increased blood glucose levels and diabetes.

Around 3.6 million Australians, including one in four Australian adults over the age of 25 have either diabetes or impaired glucose tolerance (pre-diabetes). There are two main types: type 1 diabetes, an autoimmune disease which is usually diagnosed in childhood and requires injections of insulin, and type 2 diabetes, which represents 85-90% of all cases. Type 1 diabetes is not associated with modifiable risk factors. Type 2 diabetes does have a number of modifiable risk factors including unhealthy eating, physical inactivity and overweight/obesity. There are other risk factors including family history, ethnic background, and age.

About Diabetes NSW

Diabetes NSW is Australia’s largest member based charity dedicated to people living with or at risk of diabetes. Our priority is their health and well-being, enabling them to live their lives well through positive support and education – every step of the way.
As well as helping to prevent diabetes, its complications and improve people’s lives on a day-to-day basis, we support crucial research into finding better treatments and a cure for diabetes.

**About Diabetes Australia**

Diabetes Australia is the national organisation for people affected by all types of diabetes and those at risk. We work to reduce the impact of diabetes in partnership with consumers, health professionals and researchers dedicated to diabetes.

For more information or to make a donation, contact Diabetes NSW toll free on 1300 136 588, or visit [diabetesnsw.com.au](http://diabetesnsw.com.au) or [diabetesaustralia.com.au](http://diabetesaustralia.com.au)