Real impact of diabetes underreported

Diabetes Australia has noted the release today of a new report - Cardiovascular disease, diabetes and chronic kidney disease - Australian Facts: Mortality from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare which shows that 53,000 deaths each year result from cardiovascular disease, diabetes and chronic kidney disease which are highly inter-related.

Diabetes Australia CEO, Professor Greg Johnson "This report is based on death certificate data which underreports diabetes related deaths," said Prof Johnson. "Often people may have had diabetes for many years and yet, when they die of a heart attack or stroke or kidney failure that was directly related to diabetes – the diabetes is not recorded on the death certificate."

While cardiovascular death rates have fallen significantly since 1981, there has been no reduction in diabetes death rate reported over the same period - this highlights the need for more prevention and early intervention to reduce the burden of diabetes and related conditions.

"We need a more coordinated and consistent approach in primary care to detecting those at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and chronic kidney disease through an integrated health check. I suspect many people in the community would be surprised to know that we do not have an integrated health check approach in Australia and we often look at different health risks in isolation.

"The report highlights higher death rates from diabetes, cardiovascular disease and kidney disease among people in low socio-economic groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and those living in remote areas.

“An integrated health check is the best way to ensure we identify those at high risk of type 2 diabetes or cardiovascular disease or chronic kidney disease in one process - and maximise the opportunity for prevention and early treatment."

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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