ACT Government leads the way on sugary drinks in schools

Diabetes Australia today welcomed the ACT Government’s decision to ban sugary drinks from government schools.

Diabetes Australia CEO Prof Greg Johnson said this was a very important move to protect school students from the risk of overconsumption of sugar sweetened soft drinks, sports drinks and energy drinks.

ACT’s action to remove sugary drinks from vending machines follows Queensland’s precedent of removing sugary drinks from school vending machines nearly ten years ago.

“We know there is massive overconsumption of these sugar sweetened drinks in Australia and this is contributing to the epidemic of type 2 diabetes. In the 12 months to October 2012, Australians bought 1.28 billion litres of these sugary drinks and children and young people are big consumers” said Prof Johnson.

“There is no reason to have vending machines with sugary drinks in our schools in the first place” he said.

“They are not part of a healthy diet and the Australian Dietary Guidelines and World Health Organisation both recommend we limit the consumption of these sugary drinks.

“Too often we see Governments announcing small scale efforts to put some of the healthy options back into our lives so it is very encouraging to see the ACT Government actually address the hard issue of taking some of the unhealthy factors out of the lives of our children,” he said. “This won’t solve the problem but it will help.”

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.