



MEDIA RELEASE

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TUESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2008

SUMMIT SETS PRIORITIES FOR FIGHTING DIABETES

Diabetes Australia has called on the federal government to match any new Olympic sports funding with investment in community diabetes and obesity prevention programs.

The National President of Diabetes Australia Dr Gary Deed made the call today at a summit on diabetes attended by leading health experts and federal MPs in Parliament House, Canberra.

Dr Deed has warned that significant new funding is needed to try to stem the growth of obesity and type 2 diabetes in Australia, highlighted in an alarming Access Economics Report released 10 days ago.

Dr Deed said, "We have heard a lot in the last few weeks about how Australia needs to match Britain in the Olympic medals race and consideration of a national UK-style lottery to fund this effort. Diabetes Australia will be pressing government to ensure that any fresh funding for elite sports development be matched with investment in community health programs to stem obesity and diabetes.

"While recognising the vital role that Olympic sport plays in our lives and the positive messages it conveys we are anxious to ensure that we concentrate our efforts and investment on the health of the nation and preventing the growing toll of chronic diseases."

The Access Economics Report commissioned by Diabetes Australia found that 3.71 million Australians are obese with a current estimated cost to the nation of \$8.3 billion in financial costs and \$49.9 billion in the value of lost wellbeing.

The report titled "Growing economic costs of obesity in 2008" emphasised the economic cost of obesity in Australia requires urgent attention.

“While strong and positive steps have already been taken in the fight against diabetes, much, much more is needed,” Dr Deed said. “People are more mindful of healthy eating choices and the need for exercise, but the Access Economics Report shows there is a long way to go,” Dr Deed said.

The Diabetes Australia summit aims to engage government and the private sector on a range of issues including diabetes prevention initiatives which focus on improving physical environments which encourage healthier lifestyles.

Key speakers at the summit will each present three top priorities to be addressed over the next five years in the key focus areas of awareness, prevention, detection, management and research.

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Note to Editors

The Diabetes Australia Summit

Rooms 2S1 & 2S2 at Parliament House, Canberra

0900

2nd September 2008

For Interview:

Dr Gary Deed, Diabetes Australia National President, 0411 171 790

Dr Ian White, Diabetes Australia National Policy Manager 0418 389 671

Matt O'Brien, Chief Executive Officer, Diabetes Australia, 0419 264 856,

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Health Communications Australia

The growing economic costs of obesity in 2008 report is available at: diabetesaustralia.com.au

Summit Program

9.00 Introduction - Prof George Rubin

9.05 Welcome - the Hon Judi Moylan MP

9.10 Senator the Hon Jan McLucas – Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health & Ageing

9.20 The Hon Joe Hockey - Shadow Minister for Health & Ageing

9.30 Dr Gary Deed, Diabetes Australia National President

9.40 Prof Martin Silink
10.00 Morning Tea
10.30 Prof George Rubin
10.35- 12.00 **Awareness** - Dr Ian White
Prevention - A/Prof Ruth Colagiuri
Detection - Prof Stephen Colagiuri
Management - A/Prof Jeff Flack
A1c Map of Australia - Dr Chrys Michaelides
Research - Prof Don Chisholm
12.00 Lunch
12.45 Prof George Rubin
1.00- 3.30 Workshops
3.30 Afternoon Tea
3.45 Facilitators' Feedback Presented
4.15 General Discussion
4.45 Dr Gary Deed and Prof George Rubin