

Media Brief:

State Election coming up on 26 November, and the community is calling on both major parties to act on the other pandemic – the diabetes pandemic.

- Diabetes Victoria and 26 diabetes community leaders are calling on the next state government to act now – see the Open Letter.
- Government knows one in four people in Victoria's hospitals has diabetes, and has identified the need to reduce hospital admissions. Yet, there is no clear plan to achieve this.
- We need a Victorian Diabetes Plan to provide greater support and care.
- One in five Victorian voters are impacted in some way by diabetes. They are either one of the 374,000 people living with the condition, or a family member of someone with diabetes. Many more Victorians are at risk of type 2 diabetes.
- Diabetes complications are serious – they can include blindness, limb amputations, and kidney and heart failure.
- One in five COVID-19 deaths over the past two years have been among people with pre-existing diabetes.
- No one chooses diabetes. Show your support for people with diabetes by sharing this Open Letter with your Member of Parliament on World Diabetes Day – 14 November – 101 years since the life-saving discovery of insulin.
- We are drawing attention to the two Victorian suburbs that have the highest prevalence of diabetes - Dandenong and Broadmeadows. On World Diabetes Day, the Drum Theatre, Town Hall Dandenong and Broadmeadows Townhall will be lit up in blue. This illumination will assist in raising awareness of diabetes, as well as hope for people living with this chronic condition.
- Diabetes Victoria's CEO, Glen Noonan is available for interview and comment.



Community leaders unite to call for urgent action on diabetes

Diabetes Victoria released today, on World Diabetes Day, an “Open Letter” to both major parties seeking a commitment to address the incredibly serious and growing diabetes pandemic.

The open letter is signed by 26 leaders of the health and diabetes community, including well known advocates for diabetes, Dr Susan Alberti AC and Prof Paul Zimmet AO.

CEO of Diabetes Victoria, Glen Noonan said, “We are calling on the next Victorian Government to make an election commitment now to prioritise the support of Victorians and their families, who are living with diabetes.

“Government already knows **one in four** people in Victoria’s hospitals has diabetes.

“There’s a recognition we need to reduce hospital admissions among people with diabetes. But there is **no clear plan** on how to achieve this. The issue is not being taken seriously enough.

“The community needs both major parties to act on diabetes care - and recognise that over 1 million Victorians – **that is, one in five voters** – are affected by diabetes in some way, either by having some type of diabetes themselves, or having a family member with diabetes.

“We need a plan – an ambitious Victorian Diabetes Plan – focused on the urgent need to improve both the health and quality of life of all Victorians affected by, or at risk of, diabetes, and to reduce hospital admissions,” he said.

Currently there is no cure for any type of diabetes and all types of diabetes have long-term health implications, which can reduce both quality and length of life.

Mr Noonan said, “In the past two years, **one in five COVID-19 deaths** have been among people with pre-existing diabetes. People with diabetes have been far more likely than the general population to be hospitalised, and experience very serious complications.

“Diabetes is increasing at a faster rate than any other chronic condition and remains one of the biggest challenges confronting our health system. These are testing times for everyone, but particularly for the 379,000 Victorians who are currently living with diabetes,” he said.

For detailed information and to download the Open Letter visit: www.diabetesvic.org.au

Media enquiries: Annette Glenister – 0400 772 722.



Open Letter to Government

November 2022
 To: Premier Andrews
 Minister for Health
 Minister for Education
 Minister for Mental Health
 CC: All MPs

RE: Community Call for a Victorian Diabetes Plan

On behalf of the more than 374,000 Victorians living with diabetes and their families, we call upon the government to make an election commitment to develop a Victorian Diabetes Plan to prioritise support for Victorians living with diabetes.

Diabetes is an extremely serious and complex set of conditions that require daily self-care. Currently, there is no cure for any type of diabetes. All types of diabetes have long-term health implications, which can reduce both quality and length of life.

The Victorian Government knows that **one in four people in Victoria's hospitals has diabetes**.

It has identified the need to reduce hospital admissions among people with diabetes. But it currently has no clear plan on how to achieve this.

We need a plan - an ambitious **Victorian Diabetes Plan** - focused on the urgent need to improve both the health and quality of life of all Victorians affected by, or at risk of, diabetes.

A Victorian Diabetes Plan would identify the key priorities affecting Victoria's healthcare system and economy.

It would set goals for achieving short, medium and long-term targets. Such a plan would empower health systems, health professionals and researchers to realise and address the priorities, and aim for and meet the targets.

In the past two years, we have all been acutely aware of the COVID-19 pandemic. But we must not ignore the other pandemic: diabetes. **One in the COVID-19 deaths** has been among people with pre-existing diabetes. People with diabetes have been far more likely than the general population to be hospitalised, and experience very serious complications. This request is critical because diabetes is increasing at a faster rate than any other chronic condition and remains one of the biggest challenges confronting our health system. Unlike many other similarly serious conditions, diabetes has an image problem, so it does not receive the funding or attention it deserves. Now is the time to remedy this situation.

In the lead up to World Diabetes Day on 14th November 2022, there is a timely opportunity to announce a commitment to a Victorian Diabetes Plan, as one of your government's key election commitments for health.

We request your urgent attention to this matter. All Members of Parliament need to consider the health and well-being of all people with, or affected by, diabetes in Victoria - they represent over one million Victorians, one fifth of the electorate.

This letter is signed and supported by Victoria's leaders in diabetes, who are deeply concerned by the lack of prioritisation of diabetes in Victoria over many years. They include specialists in endocrinology, diabetes education, primary care, public health, epidemiology, psychology, as well as philanthropy, the leaders of professional associations, and universities.

Together, we are united to support, empower and campaign for people living with, or at risk of, diabetes.
 We call on you to commit to working with us to bring to fruition a Victorian Diabetes Plan.
 Yours sincerely

Glen Noonan,
 Chief Executive Officer, Diabetes Victoria
 Adjunct Professor, Deakin University

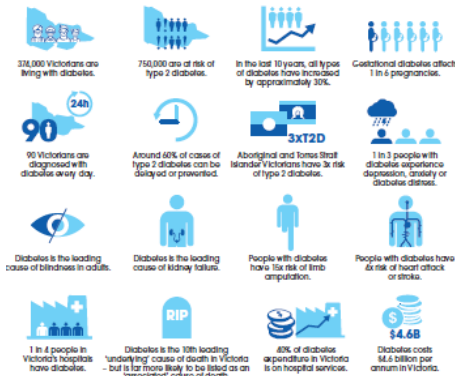
We can improve health and well-being.
We can reduce the personal, social and financial costs.

This call is supported by the undersigned:

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| Dr Susan Aldwell AC
Chair, Susan Aldwell Medical Research Foundation | Carolyn Hines
Dietitian, Heart Programs and Services, Diabetes Victoria | Prof Timothy Skinner
Professor of Psychology, La Trobe University, Bendigo
Editor in Chief, Australian Journal of Rural Health |
| A/Prof Sof Andriakopoulos
Chief Executive Officer, Australian Diabetes Society | Prof Rachael Huxley
Executive Dean, Faculty of Health, Deakin University | Prof Jane Splaing
Foundation Director, The Australian Centre for Behavioural Research in Diabetes, Diabetes Victoria and Deakin University |
| A/Prof Ralph Ausdehn
General Practitioner, Carlton Family Medical
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Director, St Vincent's Institute | Prof Helena Teede
Executive Director, Monash Partners Academic Health Science Centre |
| Boata Member, Primary Care Diabetes Society of Australia | A/Prof Mark Kennedy
General Practitioner, Coto Medical Clinic
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| Ann Bush
Credentialed Diabetes Educator (private practice), Victoria | Prof Richard Mackinlay
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| Vice-President, Australian Diabetes Educators Association | Prof Diana Magliano OAM
Head, Diabetes and Population Diabetes Institute | A/Prof John Westwood
Endocrinologist, Royal Melbourne Hospital |
| Justine Cain
Group Chief Executive Officer, Diabetes Australia | Jane Morris
Executive Manager, Obesity Policy Coalition | Senior Research Officer, Walter and Eliza Hall Institute |
| Prof Peter Colman AM
Endocrinologist, Royal Melbourne Hospital | A/Prof Allison Naniaris
Stream Lead, Diabetes Ambulatory and Community Care, Royal Melbourne Hospital Service, Royal Women's Hospital | Chief Executive Officer, JDRF Australia |
| Boata Director, Diabetes Victoria | A/Prof Mark Savage
Consultant Endocrinologist, Bendigo Health
Clinical Dean, Monash University, Bendigo | Prof Paul Zimmet AO
Professor of Diabetes, Monash University, Honorary President, The International Diabetes Federation |
| Prof Mark Cooper AO
Head, Department of Diabetes, Monash University | Prof Jonathan Shaw
Deputy Director, (Clinical and Population Health), Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute | 2018 Victorian Senior Australian of the Year (awarded for services to diabetes care and prevention) |
| A/Prof Bill Ethell
Director, Australian Centre for Accelerating Diabetes Innovations, University of Melbourne | | Prof Sophia Tsangas
Endocrinologist, Melbourne |
| Dr Gallagher AO
Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation | | Post President and present member of Australian Diabetes Society |

Victorian Diabetes Plan

The case for a plan



The plan would

- Establish short, medium and long-term goals to improve health and well-being.
- Identify the priority actions needed to prevent and detect diabetes, optimise treatment and well-being, and support innovative research.
- Focus on achieving health equity.
- Align with other key Victorian health and research strategies.
- Reduce hospital admissions, complications, costs, and save lives.
- Make the difference Victorians deserve.

Diabetes is a Victorian document - Diabetes is a Living Times. The plan Priorities 2022 - 14 outlines the key priorities areas, including the Victorian diabetes plan to improve the health and quality of life of thousands of Victorians with diabetes.

Further details see:

diabetesvic.org.au/diabetes-advocacy

