

**PETER DUTTON  
MINISTER FOR HEALTH  
WORLD DIABETES CONGRESS – PARLIAMENTARY MELBOURNE  
CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION CENTRE  
MONDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2013**

Acknowledgements

- Sir Michael Hirst (President, International Diabetes Federation)
- Mr Guy Barnett (Diabetes Australia Ambassador)
- Parliamentary colleagues and champions, from home and around the world,

Welcome to Australia and to this Forum and the World Diabetes Congress.

Over the past 50 years, your umbrella organisation, the International Diabetes Federation, has grown to more than 200 national diabetes associations, in more than 160 countries.

Gatherings such as this allow us to further our understanding of diabetes by hearing from international experts and discussing opportunities for reform, and for progress in caring for people with diabetes, their families and carers.

The networks have become a powerful voice to disseminate awareness about global advances and standards of care and treatment.

A global parliamentary group is potentially an even more powerful base to promote policy views and practical initiatives of relevance – because you take this knowledge into the seats of power around the world.

So today we especially welcome the global inauguration of like-minded parliamentarians to become Parliamentary Champions for Diabetes here at this Forum.

This Forum creates an opportunity for MPs to build relationships with other key decision-makers, relevant diabetes organisational leaders, and communities.

The international nature of this Forum and the Congress itself is a fine example of nations and experts working together on better ways to prevent, manage and treat diabetes.

In Australia, diabetes directly affects around a million people and, like many other western nations, our population is ageing - making it more important than ever for governments to be smart and proactive in our approach to these issues.

This Government understands the importance of a coordinated approach to managing diabetes - one which spans all levels of government and the healthcare industry.

We believe this should be done within the broader context of primary care and supporting patients with complex health conditions. It should also be done within the context of the growing burden of chronic disease on our health system.

While diabetes is an insidious disease in its own right, it also contributes to – and is affected by – a range of other chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease and chronic kidney disease.

The co-morbid nature of these diseases make it essential that future approaches to diabetes consider and account for the overlapping affects that can arise from other chronic diseases.

We must consider that better health outcomes for diabetes prevention and mitigation may be realised through interventions with a focus on risk factors and behaviours shared by multiple diseases.

This will be an Australian focus as we seek to improve the prevention, detection, management and research methods directed at diabetes.

During the election campaign, the Government committed to a National Diabetes Strategy and today I would like to formally announce some of the details of that Strategy.

The Strategy will provide an up-to-date high-level policy framework for action in diabetes prevention and care. This will build on existing work to enhance current investment; it will be underpinned by the best available evidence and it will focus on high-impact achievable actions while recognising the fiscal outlook facing all governments.

The Strategy will occur at the same time as broader considerations on the National Chronic Disease Strategy, and will be a valuable

opportunity to adopt an integrated approach to policy on a national level as well as maintaining an alignment with key work progressing in the international arena.

The Strategy's Advisory Group will be co-chaired by the Hon Judi Moylan and Professor Paul Zimmet.

Judi Moylan is the President of Diabetes Australia and brings a wealth of knowledge to this role. She established the bi-partisan Federal Parliamentary Diabetes Support Group in 2000 and last year she was awarded the Sir Kempson Maddox Award for her contribution to diabetes prevention.

Professor Paul Zimmet also brings a wealth of expertise. He was founder and Director of the International Diabetes Institute, Australia's first institute dedicated exclusively to diabetes. He holds many impressive positions including Honorary President of the International Diabetes Federation. In 2001, Professor Zimmet was appointed to the Order of Australia for services to medical research, particularly in the field of diabetes.

Headed by Judi and Paul, the Advisory Group will identify gaps in services and develop a best practice model which draws on existing national and international approaches to diabetes prevention and management.

I want the Group to identify areas where we can harness existing resources and reduce red tape so that we can be sure that adequate resources are being directed towards activities which will enhance patient outcomes.

The Advisory Group will deliver the Strategy within 12 months and will consider activities which will:

- Improve early identification of diabetes
- Enable optimal management of patients by general practice and the primary health care sector
- Improve health literacy and support for self-care, including applications to enhance monitoring of an individual's condition
- Ensure timely responses to prevent and manage complications caused by diabetes such as kidney and heart health, eye and foot complications, and
- Focus on those at most risk, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and pregnant women

I will ask the Group to provide advice on how to strengthen the evidence base through research and the translation of research into practice, including enhanced use of clinical practice guidelines, standards and pathways.

As I said, I have asked Judi and Paul to report back to me by the end of next year. In the mean time I look forward to working with them and the

rest of the group on making the national response to diabetes a priority within my portfolio.

This is not the only action this Government is taking to tackle diabetes. During the election campaign, we committed \$35 million of funding to develop a Clinical Research Network to help find a cure for Type 1 diabetes. This money will fund patient trails locally and internationally and take a coordinated nationwide approach to diabetes research.

Since the election, we have provided \$1.4 million funding for the Type 1 Diabetes Insulin Pump Programme to help more than 200 children to maintain a continuous level of insulin for glycaemic control.

This funding provides an 80 per cent subsidy on the cost of insulin pumps so children can avoid up to seven painful and inconvenient injections every day.

The Government also provides national funding, through our Medicare scheme, to support the early detection, diagnosis and intervention health assessment items for chronic diseases.

Affordable medicines worth around \$480 million each year are available through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme to help treat diabetes and alleviate its symptoms.

To help reduce the health risks and the social and economic burden of chronic disease and diabetes in Australia, we share the IDF's

commitment to gathering and actively monitoring local data for epidemiological and intervention purposes.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has recently conducted the 2011-2013 Australian Health Survey.

This is a major undertaking that, for the first time in its history, included a biomedical testing component.

That component has produced data crucial to our understanding of chronic disease rates, including diabetes, as well as our knowledge of how chronic diseases interact with one another.

Australians place particular value on high quality clinical research which affords us the best chance to enhance life expectancy and improve the quality of life for people affected by diabetes.

Australians are also very keen to learn from your initiative in the *Young Leaders in Diabetes Programme*. In a time of extensive social media between our young people, young leaders are the best avenue to effective cross-generational education and communications.

So thank you for coming to share your knowledge and experiences with us.

I will look forward to hearing about the future work arising from this Forum, both at home and globally, to help us improve the longevity and the quality of the lives of people with diabetes.

Thank you.