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## **New diabetes figures show need for greater focus on prevention**

The Victorian Health Monitor report released today estimates that up to 236,000 Victorian adults are living with diabetes (based on 2008 population data).

This closely aligns with the 250,739 Victorian adults currently registered on the National Diabetes Services Scheme database, administered by Diabetes Australia.

"Diabetes continues to be the epidemic of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and it's affecting Victorians of all ages and all stages of life," says Professor Greg Johnson, CEO of Diabetes Australia – Vic.

"The VHM report suggests we may have made some inroads into the large number of cases of undiagnosed (silent) type 2 diabetes through efforts in Victoria in recent years promoting diabetes risk assessment, screening and early intervention through programs such as the Life! Program which also provides prevention courses for those at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes."

Prof. Johnson says the VHM report offers important information about those at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

"About 25 per cent of adult Victorians are obese. Excessive consumption of unhealthy foods combined with insufficient physical activity continues to drive an epidemic of type 2 diabetes," he says.

The VHM report also points to the challenges people face in managing their diabetes, with only 39 per cent of people achieving the target HbA1c level of 7 per cent or less.

"This is not a surprise and people with diabetes are not failures," says Prof Johnson.

"Diabetes is a complex and serious challenge. Diabetes is at least three different conditions – type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes and gestational diabetes."

"We need more focus on diabetes, better team care systems, and more support if we really want to improve the outcomes for the quarter of a million Victorians with diabetes."

"If we don't do this – we will see an even greater burden of diabetes complications including cardiovascular disease, kidney failure, vision impairment, limb amputations – and our hospital system will face ever increasing demands."

Diabetes Australia Victoria is the leading charity and peak consumer body working to reduce the impact of diabetes.

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### **For more information:**

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