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Victorians urged to measure up for new *Life!*

All Victorians are being urged to take the risk test for type 2 diabetes and assess their eligibility for the new *Life!* Program

Victorians at risk of type 2 diabetes are about to get personalised help to address their eating habits and turn their life around through physical activity.

The program, the first of its kind worldwide, is called *Life!* – Taking Action on Diabetes was based on successful trials of group-based sessions in Finland. It will be provided by Diabetes Australia – Vic as part of an \$18.3 million State Government *Go for your life* initiative.

Dr Ralph Audehm, director of the new program, said 25,000 Victorians in many locations across Victoria would get access to the program.

There are over 200,000 Victorians currently with diabetes and a further 15,000 diagnosed with type 2 diabetes every year. For every person known to have type 2 diabetes there is another who is unaware.

An estimated 500,000 Victorians have pre-diabetes – including impaired glucose tolerance – who don't have diabetes yet but are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes over the next five years. This equates to around one in four Victorian adults over the age of 25 who have diabetes or pre-diabetes.

Dr Audehm said the importance of a healthy lifestyle in the prevention of type 2 diabetes could not be overstated.

“Type 2 diabetes can be prevented by nearly 60 per cent. By maintaining a healthy weight, being physically active and following a healthy eating plan you have the best chance of preventing type 2 diabetes. Early diagnosis is critical for people with diabetes who are at risk of developing severe complications such as heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and amputation.” Dr Audehm said.

“Complete the Type 2 Diabetes Risk Test and discuss your results with your family doctor. You may be eligible to be referred to the new *Life!* Program. Dr Audehm explained.

Local family doctors will refer people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes to a six session program where they will be guided on changing eating habits and increasing physical activity.

“The commitment is for six sessions and the goal is to work toward a weight loss of at least five per cent of body weight through better diet and 30 minutes of moderate exercise every day.” Dr Audehm said.

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