

MEDIA RELEASE

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GPs urge Tasmanians to check their risk of Type 2 Diabetes

Tasmania's GPs are urging 40–49-year-olds, who may be at risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes, to do a simple check to see if they are at risk of Type 2 Diabetes.

General Practice Tasmania is currently running a statewide press campaign to highlight the risks associated with Type 2 Diabetes. The campaign focuses on a quick test, the AUSDRISK, which people can take to see if they are at risk. If participants score 12 or above on the AUSDRISK, they may be at a high risk of developing diabetes.

General Practice Tasmania spokesperson, Dr Judith Watson, said that the incidence of diabetes among Tasmanians had increased significantly over the past 12 years to the point that it was now among the leading causes of death and disability in Tasmania.

"Tasmania's mortality rate from diabetes is higher than the national average and it is important that people are aware of the risk factors".

"Many risk factors are preventable. Carrying excess weight around the waist is a major contributing factor in the onset of type 2 diabetes and it is essential that we encourage Tasmanians who may be at risk to do something about it and to offer them help.

"Complications from diabetes can affect the heart, kidneys, eyes, nervous system and circulation and it is one of the top five underlying causes of death in men and in the top seven for women," Dr Watson said.

"If people believe they are at risk, they should consult their GP about their concerns as their GP can provide the appropriate advice and referrals for further help if necessary. For example there support available through locally run "Reset your Life" programs, services through Diabetes Tasmania, as well as the telephone-based Get Healthy Coaching and Information Service, all of which can help patients to make lifestyle changes.

"It is timely at the start of the year to makes lifestyle changes and to stick with them.

Dr Watson said that Type 2 diabetes was commonly related to lifestyle factors that could be prevented.

"Taking the simple AUSDRISK test will show you whether you are at risk. Your general practice is a great place to seek advice about managing your lifestyle in terms of diet, exercise and other risk factors, no matter what your age," Dr Watson said.

To take the AUSDRISK test online, participants should go www.newleaseoflife.com.au for information about programs in the north and north west phone your local Division of General Practice:

General Practice North Clinical Services 6331 3777
General Practice North West 6425 0800

End Media Release

The General Practice Tasmania network is a unique statewide infrastructure that supports contemporary general practice in Tasmania by linking GPs with each other, by supporting all members of the general practice team and, increasingly, by employing or supporting allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, dieticians and psychologists to be part of the primary care team. General Practice Tasmania is also a proud member of the Australian General Practice Network.

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