



# FROM THE CHAIR AND CEO

Welcome to our Annual Review for 2021/22. As you'll see, a lot has changed over the past year. First and foremost, Melanie Gates joined Diabetes WA as our new CEO in November 2021. With Melanie's background in health including time in the hospital space, health technology and virtual care, she joined us at a pivotal moment, leading Diabetes WA into the first year of our new five year strategy.

The past year was a difficult one for Western Australia, as the COVID pandemic rolled on and people across our state coped with disruption and unpredictability. At Diabetes WA, we rose to that challenge and embraced the opportunity to think differently about how we can best serve West Australians, expanding our adoption of digital delivery and developing fantastic virtual programs. Our priority was to find new ways of supporting our consumers, many of whom were struggling to access the support and services they needed in a very challenging environment.

We have taken important lessons from the pandemic and, more broadly, understand the importance of connection and collaborations across the whole of the health system to serve the consumer better. We are continuing to work in this space, collaborating with our partners to identify opportunities for a more integrated approach to diabetes models of care.

This year, we were proud to launch our Diabetes

WA Reconciliation Action Plan. Diabetes and its complications are disproportionately impacting upon the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Diabetes WA's Reconciliation Action Plan is our commitment to advancing reconciliation within our sphere of influence. We have already taken significant actions to develop strong relationships and improve staff knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. By formally engaging in our Reconciliation Action Plan, we acknowledge that we still have a long way to go and commit to continuing to move forward with open hearts and minds on our reconciliation journey.

We have journeyed to many corners of the state across the past 12 months, supporting individuals living with diabetes through the delivery of education programs and clinical services. Our team has travelled as far north as Kununurra, as far east as the Ngaanyatjarra Lands and deep into our great southern area. We are constantly expanding our understanding of what our consumers need from us on their own diabetes journey and how we can best support them.

The focus of this year's review is reflecting on our achievements and looking forward to the next five years and beyond. We are grateful for those who have helped us to reach this point – for the supporters and partners you will find listed on page 8. We would also



**Mary Anne Stephens**  
Diabetes WA Board Chair



**Melanie Gates**  
Diabetes WA CEO

like to thank our amazing board members and make special mention of Alan Wright and Andrew Smith who are retiring this year. We also must acknowledge the incredible team at Diabetes WA who answer thousands of calls every year, deliver hundreds of programs and dedicate themselves to delivering outstanding services and experiences. Our team, many of whom live with diabetes, are dedicated to our consumers and our mission. We thank them sincerely for the work they do every day.

Thank you for your support over the past financial year. We look forward to continuing our journey with you in FY23.

# INTRODUCTION

## Delivering diabetes care differently

Our world has changed. The pandemic has had an enormous impact on the way we live, connect and manage our health. Diabetes WA has embraced this opportunity to evolve and make sure we're still the first port of call for West Australians living with diabetes.

For more than 55 years, we have been the voice of those affected by diabetes or at risk of developing it. Since 2020, that voice has become more important than ever, as people with diabetes have had to change the way they access vital face-to-face care and resources. We have been ready to adapt, moving seamlessly to online services and workshops, while continuing to offer our award-nominated Telehealth services to people around the state.

Nearly half a million West Australians live with either prediabetes or diabetes (type 1, type 2 or gestational diabetes). Every day another 30 people are diagnosed. There is currently no known cure and, if left undiagnosed or unmanaged, diabetes can lead to life-changing complications.

Diabetes is a complex condition and, at Diabetes WA, we understand how challenging it is for people to

manage. We deliver a range of programs, services and resources to our diabetes community, providing them with the support and person-centred education they need to take the stress out of their diabetes journey.

This year, Diabetes WA has unveiled its five-year strategic plan, which sets out how we will continue to evolve until 2027. The next five years are about building on our strengths, learning from our experiences to date, being bold and innovative in the way we work and accelerating our collaborations for the benefit of those living with diabetes. One of the first steps in our journey forwards has been committing to our first Reconciliation Action Plan. We have already taken significant actions to develop stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and are working to improve staff knowledge and understanding of their cultures.

**We believe in helping people with diabetes take charge of their health journey.** While we will always keep up with the latest science and technology around diabetes management, we know the value in listening to the past and to the lived experience of our members. We're excited to be moving forward into a bold new future and look forward to standing beside you.





# WHAT WE DO

Our mission is to transform the lives of all people who live with or are at risk of diabetes. We provide the essential support, education and services that allow people affected by diabetes to live full, healthy lives.

Diabetes WA is a leading and innovative health services provider and a powerful voice for people living with diabetes. We have the expertise to educate, to advocate, to lead, and to collaborate with others working in this space. Our aim is to reduce the impact of diabetes on the lives of West Australians and to build a more equitable health system in our state.



## PREVENTION

Reducing the risk and incidence of diabetes in Western Australia

## DIAGNOSIS

Ensuring prompt intervention to give people with diabetes the best possible start to their journey

## SELF-MANAGEMENT

Helping people with diabetes manage their health to avoid complications

## SUPPORT

Using our unique services and expertise to make sure West Australians with diabetes can get the advice and assistance they need, wherever they live

# WHAT WE DO

## Who we help

Around half a million West Australians are at risk of or live with diabetes. Every day, 30 more people are diagnosed with either type 1, type 2 or gestational diabetes. Diabetes WA gives these people a collective voice.

## Type 1

A third of people with type 1 diabetes are diagnosed before they turn 16, while another 40% are diagnosed between the ages of 21 and 50 years. We are here to support West Australians with type 1 throughout what can be a long journey with diabetes.

## Type 2

More than 126,000 West Australians are currently living with type 2 diabetes. That number is rising.

Studies show the true prevalence is significantly higher as many individuals remain undiagnosed.

## Prediabetes

Around 16% of the WA population over the age of 25 have prediabetes (elevated blood glucose levels), a third of whom are likely to develop type 2 diabetes within five years. We are focused on providing the support and education that will help more West Australians keep diabetes at bay.

## Gestational diabetes

Gestational diabetes is the fastest growing type of diabetes in WA, putting mothers and their children at increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes and obesity. We provide innovative and engaging education programs to help mothers manage – or even prevent – gestational diabetes.

“More than 140,000 West Australians have been diagnosed with diabetes, but the true prevalence is actually much higher.”







*“Diabetes WA is committed to developing an Aboriginal Health Workforce.”*

### Aboriginal people

Prevalence rates of diabetes in remote Aboriginal Communities are significantly under-reported. Aboriginal Community Controlled Health-led studies have found prevalence rates as high as one third of people living in these Communities. These numbers worsen with age. One study of three remote Aboriginal Communities demonstrated 60-70% of people over 65 years had diabetes. Diabetes WA is committed to developing the diabetes skills and confidence of Aboriginal health professionals working in Communities, using our unique co-created, culturally safe DESY (Diabetes Education Self Management Yarning) program.

## WHAT WE DO

### Culturally and linguistically diverse people

More than a third of people in Australia with diabetes were born overseas. Prevalence rates of diabetes in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities vary but those most affected by diabetes hospitalisation and complications tend to be born in the Middle East, Southern Europe, Pacific Islands, South East Asia, China and Northern Africa. Diabetes WA is dedicated to helping all West Australians affected by diabetes, whatever their background, and has collaborated with our interstate counterparts and diverse communities to develop tailored, culturally safe workshops.

We offer access to interpreter services for people from diverse backgrounds who contact our helpline and we're committed to promoting this service through our engagement with CALD communities and integrating this engagement through other services such as Diabetes Telehealth and Diabetes WA self-management programs.



# WHAT WE DO

## Rural and remote people

Diabetes prevalence is higher in regional and remote areas compared to major cities. People living in remote and very remote areas are more likely to die from diabetes (1.8 and 3.5 times respectively) and hospitalisation rates are twice as high as those from the rest of Australia. Diabetes WA is evolving and innovating our support and education services to ensure West Australians are equipped to manage their diabetes journey, no matter where they live in our great state.

## Complications

Australia has one of the worst diabetes-related amputation rates in the developed world. We know that 80% of diabetes-related amputations could be prevented if people received the right care at the right time. Our FootSmart program is just one of many education services we provide to help West Australians with diabetes minimise the risk of complications.



# OUR VALUES



## CARING FOR PEOPLE

Empowering individuals living with diabetes with respect, professionalism and empathy



## COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

Priding ourselves in high quality work and efficient use of resources



## SOLUTION FOCUSED

Leading through innovation, passion, enthusiasm and providing evidence-based solutions



## LEADING THROUGH COLLABORATION

Working in partnership with each other and like-minded organisations to achieve our mission



# Our Partners

We are proud and grateful to acknowledge the support we receive from our funders, member benefit partners and donors.

Funders		
Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care	WA Primary Health Alliance	
WA Department of Health	Australian Digital Health Agency	
WA Country Health Service	Lotterywest	

Member Benefit Partners	
The Hike Collective	Are Media
Donna Barlow Travel	Venues West
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Donors		
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City of Wanneroo	Novo Nordisk	Lions District
Eli Lilly	Roche Diagnostics	Church of Christ Dorcas Clothing
Genesis Biotech	Sigma Company Limited	Country Women’s Association
Google	Squire Patton Boggs	

## Collaborations and partnerships

Diabetes WA would not have the reach and influence we do today without the help of so many wonderful individuals and organisations. From hospitals, clinics and government departments to Aboriginal controlled organisations and diabetes organisations in Australia and across the world.

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# STRATEGY

## Engage. Empower. Innovate.

In a changing world, Diabetes WA empowers West Australians to take an active role in their health journey.

Our ever-evolving programs and services provide participants with the skills and knowledge they need to manage their wellbeing.



## Our focus

### 1. Empower and engage

We're finding new ways to empower people to successfully manage their diabetes and engaging with our consumers to co-design fit-for-purpose solutions. We will do this by advocating for ways to improve and grow our services into areas that our consumers need and raising the profile of Diabetes WA with consumers and in the broader health environment.

### 2. Evolve and innovate

We're developing innovative digital or virtual care solutions that improve equity of access and improve consumer experiences of diabetes care. We're creating a culture of innovation and digital integration, prioritising opportunities to digitise our programs and services, building a presence with diverse stakeholders in digital health, and simplifying, automating and enhancing the consumer experience through digital technologies.

### 3. Research and collaborate

We're building strong partnerships and research alliances with organisations whose strategic goals and values strongly align with Diabetes WA. We will drive research collaborations and build strategic partnerships that influence and advocate for research and evaluation projects that align with the needs of our consumers.

### 4. Developing the health workforce

We're building the confidence and ability of the health workforce to better support people to manage and prevent diabetes, particularly in identified vulnerable groups. We will play a leading role in educating health professionals in person-centred approaches to diabetes care.

### 5. Grow and enhance

We will expand our Telehealth and clinical services to reach more consumers living with diabetes, mature existing partnerships to form an integrated diabetes alliance, explore partnerships with new health stakeholders, and identify, advocate and promote evidence-based solutions to address key diabetes challenges.

### 6. Engage and invest

We're defining and strengthening a positive workplace culture to make Diabetes WA a destination employer for those passionate about helping people with diabetes. We will recruit and retain a highly skilled, engaged and diverse workforce. We will invest in the capability and expertise required to ensure our culture and workforce meet the health needs of our community.



# Empower and engage: my story

## DESMOND empowers action on diabetes

After losing family to diabetes complications, James Bell was determined to take control of his own health journey

Being diagnosed with diabetes is not a death sentence, according to James Bell, despite sadly losing his mother, father and two sisters to diabetes complications.

James says Diabetes WA’s DESMOND (Diabetes Education and Self-Management for the Ongoing and Newly Diagnosed) program has transformed his life.

Diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in 2021, James decided to explore and learn as much as he could about diabetes and how to best manage his health journey while also managing mental health challenges.

At the DESMOND program, James learned new things and gained confidence that he was on the right track with his newly adopted approach to eating.

**“I didn’t realise I was doing as well as I am with the big changes I made in my life – DESMOND helped confirm things for me,”** James says.

**“I learned more about blood sugar testing and measurements and what it all means, and I learned a lot about cholesterol which I knew nothing about.”**

By changing his eating habits, James lost 10 kilos and decreased his blood pressure and blood glucose levels in just three months. As well as helping to reduce his medications, these changes significantly improved his mental health.

James’s message to people living with diabetes is not to be isolated, but to be open to learning new things, and to talk to people, especially those going through similar experiences.

**“Come to a Diabetes WA group program like DESMOND, connect with people, ask every question you possibly can, talk to a diabetes educator at Diabetes WA.”**



# INNOVATE AND EMPOWER

We are investing in digital health, developing online and virtual care solutions to improve equity of access to diabetes care for all West Australians.

## OUR VISION INNOVATION

Increased access to our DESMOND and SMARTS through virtual delivery

Consumer driven integrated diabetes technology

Increased consumer engagement with digital suite of services

Expanded innovative clinical services

MyDESMOND platform enhancements and expansion

Using digital solutions to overcome barriers to access



# Programs

Our programs empower participants with the knowledge and skills they need to live a full, healthy life. Self-management is known to lower the sense of powerlessness many feel on being diagnosed with diabetes. It also helps prevent complications, reduces the risk of hospitalisations, and lifts the financial burden on individuals and our health system alike. By digitising our programs, we're making it easier for West Australians to manage their diabetes journey, which will have a profound and positive impact upon health outcomes.

## ONLINE SMARTS WORKSHOPS

Our SMART program workshops are half-day sessions that educate and empower people around specific diabetes issues. We're getting smarter with our delivery too – making each session available as a face-to-face workshop or a fully interactive online group program.

Virtualising our programs and services means they are accessible for all registrants, no matter their location in Australia. Our new online smarts programs provide a professional, welcoming service to consumers who might find the idea of attending a face-to-face session to be too difficult or inaccessible. The pilot program, trialled across the past year, has been a great success and the programs will now be rolled out in full across 2023.



*“MyDESMOND is great because I can refer to it as many times as I please. I feel great, empowered, supported, informed and healthy”*  
– Kerri, type 2 diabetes

## MyDESMOND

Developed at the request of the Australian Department of Health, MyDESMOND is a key innovation that allows us to support West Australians with diabetes in places other services have traditionally struggled to reach.

In WA, 1,859 people registered for the program in the 2021/22 period. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants reporting a greater sense of empowerment around their diabetes and a significant reduction in diabetes-related stress.

In response to COVID-19, we developed two new learning sessions, ‘Keeping Well during a pandemic’ and ‘COVID-19 and type 2 diabetes’. These sessions were also translated into Arabic, Hindi, Mandarin, Cantonese and Vietnamese.

# QUICK SNAPSHOT

**1,260** attended one of the self-management workshops we ran this year – **963** in the metro area and **297** in regional Western Australia.

## DIABETES WA LIVE WEBINARS

Our educational webinars cover a range of topics around diabetes management and allow people to access credentialled diabetes educators, regardless of where they live in WA.

First launched in 2020, our webinars are another great example of our ability to digitise our support, helping us to reach regional or isolated audiences who might otherwise struggle to attend our education sessions.

*“I feel a lot more confident, because you're working with an educator. You're not guessing what you're trying to do. You can look at food and know how much carbohydrates it will have in it and adjust your insulin dose.”*

– Bruce, type 1 diabetes

# QUICK SNAPSHOT

**1,879** people joined our digital sessions this year, including webinars (**1,635**), online support groups (**167**) and information sessions (**77**).

## OzDAFNE

We know that only 15% of people with type 1 diabetes reach insulin management targets. We're making it easier for people to meet those targets with unique online programs.

OzDAFNE (Dose Adjustment for Normal Eating) takes away the guesswork when managing diabetes. Delivered with funding from the NDSS, this five-day, Australia-specific diabetes education program, designed for adults with type 1 diabetes, teaches patients to calculate how much carbohydrate is in their food and the right dose of insulin to take.

This year, we've developed two new formats for the program – OzDAFNE@home and OzDAFNE Pump. OzDAFNE@home features online modules and a series of Zoom sessions, which will make it easier for people to access the program wherever they are in WA.

# Programs



# Programs: my story

## Getting empowered

Elizabeth Duncan hadn't ever thought about diabetes. But a shock diagnosis – and support from Diabetes WA – gave her the motivation she needed to turn her health around.

There was no history of diabetes in my family. It wasn't on my radar at all. I'd been having symptoms for a few years, but I didn't do anything about it. I was drinking so much water because I was thirsty all the time and my feet were swelling up. I had pins and needles, blurry vision, all that, but I never thought it might be diabetes. I just thought it was getting older.

When the doctor told me it was diabetes, I didn't know what to think. But I went back to see him and a dietitian and it started to make sense. I knew what had caused the diabetes. I was a sugar addict. Lollies, chocolate. I loved all that stuff.

I knew I had to go cold turkey because I know what I'm

like. It was really, really hard. But I knew I had to listen and do what my doctor and dietitian said, because they told me I was heading for a stroke or a heart attack.

I went to one of the DESMOND sessions run by Diabetes WA, which was really good. It was great to learn more about exactly how sugar affects the body. And I liked meeting other people who were going through the same thing. Our facilitator had type 1 diabetes, so she was talking from experience, it was good to hear from people who had been there.

I could feel the difference changing my diet made very quickly. Within three months, my symptoms had disappeared. And I was feeling better. When I went out

dancing on the weekend, I noticed I could dance for longer and I wouldn't get out of breath.

I went for my one year check up recently and the doctor actually said he's never seen anyone turn it around so fast. I'm more or less in remission. **He said he's never seen anyone lose the weight so quickly just by making those dietary changes.**

I go around now warning people. I tell off friends who have had symptoms but don't get themselves checked out. I tell them – you don't have to be massively overweight person to get diabetes. Have you got eye problems? Pins and needles? Do not ignore them. Get yourself checked out.



# Support and innovation

Our Diabetes Telehealth Service operated throughout the lockdowns of the past year and, as an emergency measure, was temporarily made available to people living throughout WA – rather than just those living in rural and remote areas. We also expanded our Helpline workforce to deal with a surge in calls.

Our unique services mean that all West Australians with diabetes can get the support they need, when they need it, wherever the live. Consumers can video conference a Telehealth appointment, phone our Diabetes Helpline or order their essential products from the Diabetes WA shop.

Our team of trained customer support officers are the first point of contact in our Diabetes WA call centre and will connect people with our credentialled diabetes educator for diabetes advice and support.



# Support and innovation

*“This is a great service for newly diagnosed people with diabetes and others who may need advice”*

## TELEHEALTH

Accessing diabetes care can be difficult for people living and working in regional WA. Our Diabetes Telehealth Service is at the forefront of our virtualisation process, offering specialist support, education and health professional training for West Australians who don't have access to diabetes services in their area.

Our unique, free Telehealth service makes an extraordinary difference to the lives of many regional West Australians and we're grateful for the continued funding from the WA Country Health Service and the WA Primary Health Alliance. Demand for our service continues to increase (by 12% this year), as do our referrals for country WA women diagnosed with gestational diabetes. We're proud to be able to fill gaps in local diabetes education services on the ground, most notably in the Pilbara region.

## DIABETES HELPLINE

Our Diabetes WA Helpline provides easily accessible education, advice and support to people living with diabetes, and their carers, health professionals and support workers across WA.

Our Helpline continues to be a highly valued and essential service that is meeting the needs of West Australians living with or affected by diabetes. We are able to refer those in need to specialised diabetes educators, ensuring essential early intervention. This year saw a surge of calls – many of which were referred to educators – from regional and rural areas.

Our increasing range of digital solutions mean consumers can access the service how, when and where they choose. Care is equitable no matter who they are or where they live.

# QUICK SNAPSHOT

Last year, our award-winning **Telehealth** service helped **1,311 people** and saved **763,334km** of travel for clients across the state.

Our **Helpline** team has taken more than **18,000 calls** from West Australians over the past year, with the majority concerning type 2 diabetes.

## RURAL AND REMOTE SUPPLY SERVICE

We make sure that people with diabetes living in regional and remote areas, including those living in Aboriginal Communities, can access essential supplies via our online website.

Over the past year, we've increased our support of people living with diabetes in rural and remote areas of WA, with our warehouse and online shop now supplying to 110 Aboriginal Medical Services.

# Support and innovation

*“You guys are so valued by us out here living with diabetes, I have had this for years and not really needed much help but always knew you guys were there if we needed you, striving to find ways to keep us as healthy as possible!”*

## OUR VISION GROWING AND ENHANCING

Our services are accessible to anyone living in WA

We have a fully operational, financially sustainable and integrated clinical diabetes service

Tertiary services report a reduced burden on waitlists



# Community

**Our priority is engaging and empowering the WA diabetes community. We want to raise more awareness and understanding of diabetes and its impacts on the everyday lives of West Australians.**

Partnering with Western Australian hospitals, local governments, schools and community organisations, we run a range of activities including awareness sessions in schools and workplaces, kids camps, community expos, our popular ‘Connect Events’, support groups (including two Facebook groups) and the Kellion Awards – where we celebrate people who have lived with diabetes for 50 years or more.

We run regular tech nights, updating people with type 1 diabetes on the latest technological developments and recently hosted a Type 1 Tactics evening session where experts from the UK were beamed in to provide tips on safely and effectively managing blood glucose levels during physical activity.

Our Diabetes in Schools program is designed to ensure health professionals, families and school staff are supported to help students with type 1 diabetes thrive at school. Designed in consultation with principals, teachers, parents and health professionals, the program is funded by the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care and is part of the NDSS. We are working with the Perth Children’s Hospital (PCH) and the WA Department of Education to make the program available

to all schools so that all kids and families living with type 1 diabetes (more than 1000 students across WA) get the support they need.

We are proud of our Kids Camp partnership with PCH, jointly funded by NDSS and Lotterywest, which connects and supports young children with type 1 diabetes. This year, we also partnered with PCH to run a camp for young people with type 2 diabetes, a growing demographic that can be overlooked.



# Community: our story

## Getting active in the community

Our camps for kids with type 1 diabetes have long been an important community event. This year, we launched a new camp for kids living with type 2 diabetes.

Our kids camps are part of our commitment to supporting all Western Australian kids and their families living with diabetes (currently about 1000 students across the state).

Jointly hosted by Perth Children’s Hospital (PCH) and Diabetes WA, and co-funded by NDSS and Lotterywest, our type 1 camps, usually held twice a year, connect and support young children with type 1 diabetes.

The 2021 camp was held across three days in September at the Swan Valley Adventure Centre and jam-packed with fun-filled activities — from Morning Fitness and Witches and Wizard games to the Amazing Magical Race, Quiz Night and Dress Up Disco.

Our type 1 diabetes camps give children the opportunity to build their confidence being away from their families, to have fun with their peers, and to be supported to focus on self-care, while learning how to independently manage their diabetes throughout their stay.

There were 34 troopers in attendance having fun, sharing and learning with peers who are all also living with type 1 diabetes.

The 2021 cohort were inspired by guest speaker Sabrina Davies, who spoke about her journey with type 1 diabetes and how she hasn’t let that diagnosis stop her from pursuing her dreams as a singer and hairdresser. We know how vital these activities are to creating a sense of community for West Australians with diabetes, particularly those younger members who might need extra support. The camp will run again later in 2022.

This year we expanded our offerings with the inaugural Type 2 Arts Camp, also jointly hosted by PCH, which took place in May 2022 at Ern Halliday Recreation Camp. The event was designed to be a day of art, music and storytelling where young West Australians with type 2 diabetes could meet peers and work closely with professional artists to create, share and have fun.





# Community: communication

## TURNING THE PAGE ON DIABETES

Our quarterly magazine is working to find new ways of helping West Australians manage – or even prevent – diabetes.

Diabetes WA is proud to support West Australians living with diabetes, but we're also working hard in the prevention space. Alongside a range of prevention-focused programs, we publish a bi-monthly electronic newsletter called Let's Prevent and a quarterly magazine called Diabetes Matters, both of which are packed with ideas to help people take control of their health journey.

This year, we relaunched Diabetes Matters with a bold new design and an increased focus on entertaining and informative features that make it more appealing and accessible to our broad readership. Recent issues have focused on exercise for West Australians living with – or at risk of developing – diabetes, lessening the impact of COVID-19 on people with diabetes, and how coming from a diverse background can affect your risk of developing complications from diabetes. All Diabetes WA members are eligible to receive the magazine by post or email.



# Community

## TALKING COVID

As Western Australia opened its borders to COVID-19, we found new ways to help people living with diabetes understand how best to protect themselves.

We collaborated with WA Primary Health Alliance to produce a series of videos with experts and educators discussing key topics around diabetes and COVID-19. These included what you can do to reduce your COVID risk, COVID-19 and kids with diabetes, supporting Aboriginal people living with diabetes and supporting culturally and linguistically diverse people living with diabetes and COVID-19. These videos were made available on YouTube and our social channels.

## GETTING OUT THERE

We are always looking for new opportunities to connect with West Australians. Wherever there is a chance to talk diabetes, we'll be there.

This year, we were raising the profile of diabetes at the Fremantle Running Festival, Have A Go Day, Positive Ageing Expo, World Diabetes Day, Every Woman Expo, the NAIDOC Netball Carnival – to name just a few!



# COLLABORATION

## CLOSING THE GAP

**Aboriginal Australians who live in rural and remote communities are nearly four times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than non-Aboriginal Australians.**

Diabetes strikes Aboriginal people earlier in life and more aggressively. Causes of diabetes in Aboriginal people are very complex and are confounded by the obesogenic environment and high levels of food insecurity. The current over-simplification and stigma of type 2 diabetes being a 'lifestyle disease' that can easily be prevented in Aboriginal communities is not helpful and is resulting in fear and shame.

Diabetes WA recognises and respects that to address this disproportionate burden of diabetes and its complications, all actions and initiatives must promote self-determination and align with the Closing the Gap Priority Reform areas in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. There is no easy solution, but Diabetes WA is proud to be working directly with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations to better understand Community issues and support their work delivering local diabetes healthcare.



## Collaboration: our story

## Developing our Aboriginal health workforce

Aboriginal health coordinator Natalie Jetta explains why Diabetes WA is helping to put more Aboriginal health workers into remote Communities.



Care from Aboriginal health workers has a huge impact on patient satisfaction and outcomes in remote Communities.

Here at Diabetes WA, we're working hard to recruit and train more Aboriginal health workers to tackle a rising epidemic of type 2 diabetes in Aboriginal Communities. This year, I took on a new role as the leader of our Aboriginal Health Workforce Development Project, the sole purpose of which is to get more Aboriginal health workers into those communities to deliver our Diabetes Education Self-Management Yarning (DESY) programs, which are based around person-centred care.

We're doing this for a number of reasons. One is, we can't be there all the time. We fly in and we fly out. But if we train up Aboriginal health workers who have the respect and knowledge and connection with their own Community, they're in a much better position to follow up and nurture and look after their clients.

That sense of cultural connection with Community is essential. If I go to a remote area which I've never been to before, and I don't know the history or a single person there, and I just walk in and "Hey, come to this workshop," the odds are, nobody will turn up. If they know you and they respect you, they'll feel more comfortable attending. Added to that, in some Communities, there are strict protocols in place, where visitors will need to seek permission from an elder or council to enter.

Part of our recruitment drive has involved collaborating with every Aboriginal Medical Service across WA to identify which of their Aboriginal health staff has potential to be able to help deliver DESY. It's also crucial that we help workers make space in their current workloads so that they have the capacity. We know a lot of Aboriginal health workers get super busy in their current roles and we don't want to overload them!

After training workers, we make sure we don't just abandon them, but keep in touch throughout a two year mentorship and make sure they're still following our philosophy and way of facilitating. That philosophy, which empowers people with diabetes to improve their self-management, is particularly important in remote areas, where medical services often aren't easily accessible. This philosophy is also one that I believe really resonates with Aboriginal health workers. Person-centred care is in their nature.



# Collaboration

## DESY

DESY (Diabetes Education and Self-Management Yarning) is the adapted face-to-face DESMOND program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with type 2 diabetes. The program teaches skills, behaviours and practices to self-manage their diabetes and has been developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Communities.

## ABORIGINAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Diabetes WA is collaborating with other leading health organisations to train and mentor Aboriginal Health Workers across the state so they are ready to deliver DESY in their Communities.

We know that these workers are in the best position to deliver culturally safe content to people in Aboriginal communities and help them better manage their diabetes journey.

This project targets ‘diabetes hotspots’ identified in the Pilbara, Goldfields, Kimberley, Southwest, Peel and Perth Metro regions. Inclusion of these hotspots will be dependent on letters of support from and consultation with local Aboriginal Medical Services and the

## OUR VISION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

*An Aboriginal workforce in diabetes employed sustainably across WA*

*Expanded number and reach of accredited educators*

*Increased engagement and satisfaction by generalist workforce in Diabetes WA training and support*

availability of both an Aboriginal Health Workforce and culturally safe health professionals.

The end goal of the project is the development of a collaborative diabetes model of care tailored for each region, enabling structured diabetes education to be delivered sustainably by a local Aboriginal Health Workforce and co-facilitated by culturally safe health professionals.

If successful in WA, this workforce development program has the potential to be rolled out nationally with other state-based diabetes organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations collaborating to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia.

This year, our Aboriginal health team supported 231 Aboriginal health workers in WA with training and engagement activities as well as attending the National Gathering of NDSS Aboriginal Health leads in Brisbane.

Participants were from a range of professions including Aboriginal health practitioners, credentialled diabetes educators and remote area, child health and chronic disease nurses.

DESY training has a very ‘hands on’ and practical design with extensive opportunities for participants to observe aspects of the program, discuss and then ‘have a go’ at delivering themselves.



## QUICK SNAPSHOT

This year **1034**

**people** attended

*our Aboriginal*

*Community*

*education events.*

**47 people** attended

*our DESY workshops,*

*including metro and*

*regional groups.*

# Collaboration

## COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITIES

Diabetes WA is collaborating with Ngaanyatjarra Health Service (NHS) – an Aboriginal Community Controlled health service – to support endocrinologists and nephrologists when these specialists visit Communities on the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. Our multidisciplinary support team includes a diabetes educator, an exercise physiologist (via the Perth Physical Activity and Diabetes Institute), a podiatrist and a chronic disease nurse.

Around 2,000 Ngaanyatjarra people live in the Communities of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands – which make up around 250,000km of remote Western Australia. Most people in the region speak Ngaanyatjarra as a first language, while others people also speak English, Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara and other Indigenous languages.

Our Aboriginal Health Coordinator, Kathryn Lemon, is also working with the chronic disease nurse in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands to deliver culturally appropriate groups sessions, including DESY and Feltman™.





# Collaboration

## OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Diabetes WA is committed to collaborating with Communities across our state to address the increased risk of diabetes affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. We provide support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with diabetes on traditional Country across Western Australia. We pay our respects to all Elders, both past and present, as it is their knowledge and experiences that holds the key to addressing the burden of diabetes in the future.

Diabetes WA recognises the impact that a just, equitable and reconciled Australia will have in the future development and management of diabetes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to a journey of reconciliation for our organisation and our sphere of influence. As an organisation, we are committed to our role and contribution in addressing the five dimensions of reconciliation race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity and historical acceptance.

The Reconciliation Action Plan we presented this year is our commitment to advancing reconciliation within the sphere of our influence. We have already taken some significant actions to develop strong relationships,

improve staff knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. By formally engaging in a Reconciliation Action Plan, we acknowledge that we still have a long way to go and commit to continuing to move forward with open hearts and minds on our reconciliation journey.



# Collaboration

## HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

We work closely with health professionals who support people living with diabetes. We are here to support GPs, practice nurses, allied health practitioners, diabetes educators, community workers and aged care providers.

### Conversations about Weight

Conversations about Weight is an online education package for general clinicians. It is a six-module package that forms part of the WA Healthy Weight Action Plan 2019-2024 and focuses on health professionals who are supporting people living with (or at risk of) overweight and obesity. Each module of this package concentrates on a particular aspect of weight management and presents two perspectives – patient and health professional. Throughout, conversations about weight (also from both perspectives) are put under the microscope. The online education package is currently in pilot stage with WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) launching it at a later stage.

### DESMOND Training

This year, we successfully trialled taking our DESMOND training online, which has allowed us to train facilitators not only across Western Australia, but also in other states. We were particularly proud to train Arabic and Maori and Pasifika community educators to deliver DESMOND to

*This year, through our digital communications, we reached a total of 20,620 primary care workers.*

their own communities in Brisbane. As a result of our efforts, there are currently around 153 trained facilitators delivering DESMOND around Australia. We will continue to mentor and support these facilitators.

### Diabetes Upskilling Workshops and Training

We regularly host diabetes update sessions for health professionals. Our digital sessions have continued to prove popular this year, with more than half of the 1,233 health professionals who attended our sessions doing so online.

### Working with Primary Care

We continue to build and maintain relationships with health professionals and organisations such as the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, WA Country Health Service, WAPHA and the state's various tertiary institutions and TAFEs. Our aim is to support and empower GPs, nurses and health professionals. This year, through our digital communications, we reached a total of 20,620 primary care workers, with an additional 238 engagements made face-to-face.





# Collaboration

## PREVENTION AND INNOVATION

We are changing our approach to helping West Australians prevent a diagnosis of diabetes.

Diabetes is a lifetime journey. The most cost-effective way to reduce the impact of type 2 diabetes on the WA community and our health system is prevention. We are expanding our profile, programs and workshops to increase awareness of diabetes and empower people to lower their risk.

### Total Meal Replacement pilot program

Supported weight management using Total Meal Replacement is a viable weight loss option, but not one that is currently available for people living with overweight and obesity within the WA health system. Diabetes WA has received funding from the WA Primary Health Alliance and the WA Department of Health to pilot a supported total meal replacement program in the primary care setting.

This year’s pilot program ran successfully with patients from three general practices located in Perth’s southern suburbs.

These practices recruited 50 West Australians who either had a BMI greater than 30, or an existing health-related condition and a BMI greater than 27.

The health professionals involved in the project were trained to expand their confidence and knowledge in having respectful and empowering conversations about weight, and the medical management required during a Supported Weight Management Using Total Meal Replacement program to give people the best chance of success.

## OUR VISION COLLABORATION AND RESEARCH

*Diabetes WA has increased evidence-based service offerings for the type 1 community*

*Collaborating with academic partners to translate research into powerful action*

*Establishing the Centre for Diabetes Self Care and Prevention*



# FINANCIALS

We are increasing our focus on financial sustainability and growth to ensure we can create as much impact as possible across the community.

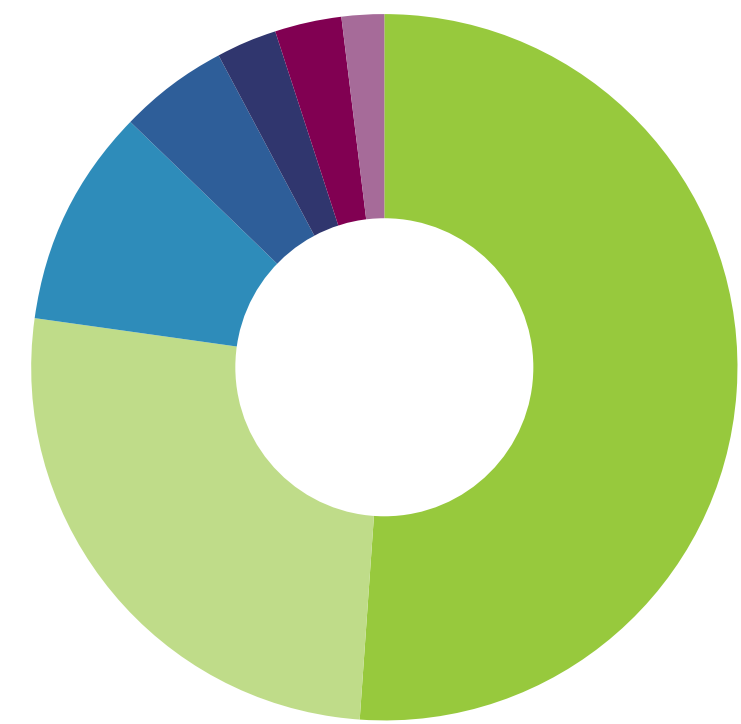
Delivering on our vision, mission and goals requires long-term financial sustainability. Our five year strategy sets our key goals to grow our services to meet our consumer needs, create new opportunities for partnerships and accelerate innovation.

We are committed to operating with a commercial mindset that makes effective use of our resources and positions us for profit for purpose, to re-invest in our programs and services for the ultimate health benefit of our consumers.



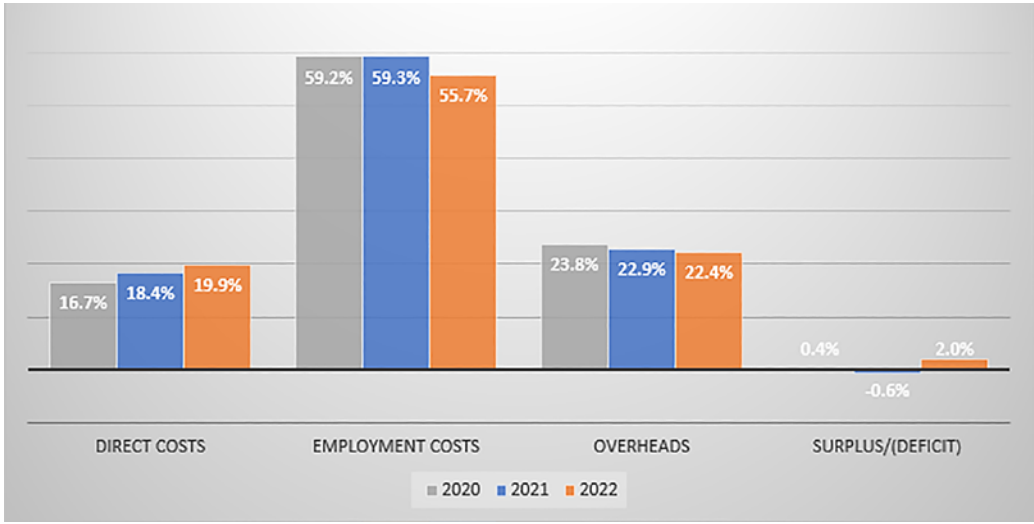
# Financials

## SOURCES OF REVENUE

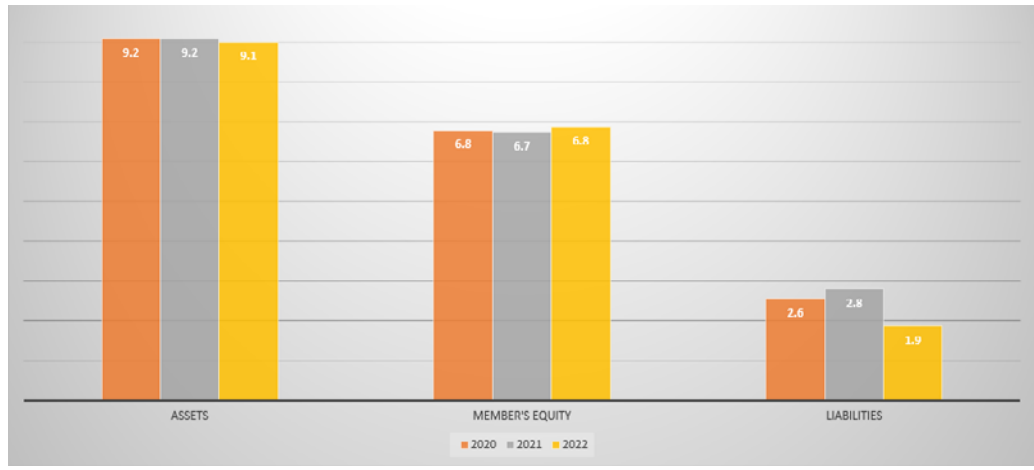


- Federal Govt Funding 51%
- State Govt Funding 26%
- Other Income 10%
- Other Funding 5%
- Product Sales 3%
- Fundraising Income 3%
- Membership Subscriptions 2%

## HOW THE REVENUE HAS BEEN SPENT



## STRONG BALANCE SHEET (\$M)







Diabetes can be a complicated condition. To assist further, we offer a range of programs, online resources, fact sheets, e-books and a Helpline. Specific resources for a variety of multicultural groups are also available. For more information visit:

[diabeteswa.com.au](http://diabeteswa.com.au)

**Follow us on social media.**



**Diabetes WA:** [diabeteswa.com.au](http://diabeteswa.com.au)

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