



ANNUAL REVIEW 2020 to 2021

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Diabetes WA would like to acknowledge Australian Aboriginal artist Rebecca Morgan for use of her artwork on page 18.

Each individual circle represents unity as all cultures come together as one, and my use of multiple circles together in the artwork signifies community. The lines in the artwork indicate a journey, and the placement of the community circles within those lines symbolises working together as a community on a journey to better health

LETTER FROM OUR CHAIR



As Chair of the Board of Diabetes WA, it is with great pride that I present to you the Annual Review for the year 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. This review reports on the difference our organisation has made to the lives of West Australians throughout the past year, as we continue to empower people to take control of their diabetes journey through the provision of education and support.

By partnering with the Australian Department of Health we have seen the DESMOND, MyDESMOND, Baby Steps and the Smarts series become embedded into the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS) providing free access for all West Australians to quality evidence based self-management education. This year we have seen the modality of programs expand from more traditional face-to-face programs towards digital platforms and webinar sessions.

This shift has expanded the reach of our programs and services to a genuinely state-wide remit. Our continued focus on program adaptation based on research and evidence means that our programs are becoming more relevant to a greater number of West Australians. We're working hard to tailor these programs to be culturally safe and applicable, while training local community healthcare workers to deliver them to their

communities. This capacity building in diabetes skill sets for the Aboriginal Health Workforce is a key advocacy focus both now and into the future. We'll continue to work alongside and be guided by Aboriginal health services and organisations.

We have continued our collaborations with local agencies across the WA health system in a year that has provided unprecedented challenges to all health system arrangements. Throughout this pandemic, our Diabetes WA team has stepped up, navigating not only the constraints imposed by lockdowns and social distancing, but also the special challenges and risks the COVID-19 virus presents to those living with diabetes. I am proud to be reporting here that, throughout the year, the commitment and resilience of our team never wavered.

I would also acknowledge not just the impact of COVID, but also those people living with

diabetes who were impacted by the Wooroloo bushfires, the terrible flooding in Carnarvon and all those in our mid-west impacted by cyclone Seroja. This truly has been a challenging year.

Our management team has been working with the Australian Government Department of Health and Diabetes Australia to finalise the new NDSS Agreement for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2024. While consumers are unlikely to see any significant change immediately to Diabetes WA's NDSS operations, the new contract provides for several reviews of the current program and service options consistent with achieving greater national consistency. These reviews are expected to be finalised by the end of December 2021 with implementation of the recommendations to commence from 1 July 2022. Having said this, I would acknowledge the great work of the management

team in delivering on all its NDSS program KPIs and once again exceeding many of the targets set.

As an organisation, the tough times we have experienced this year have reminded us why we do what we do – to provide support and reassurance to West Australians living with diabetes when they need it most.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Anne Stephens". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mary Anne Stephens
Diabetes WA Board Chair

Meet our board

diabeteswa.com.au/about-us/our-board

If you've got it, we get it.

At Diabetes WA, we are proud to stand beside 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. That voice has become more important than ever, as the ongoing COVID pandemic makes it more difficult for people with diabetes to access vital face-to-face care and resources.

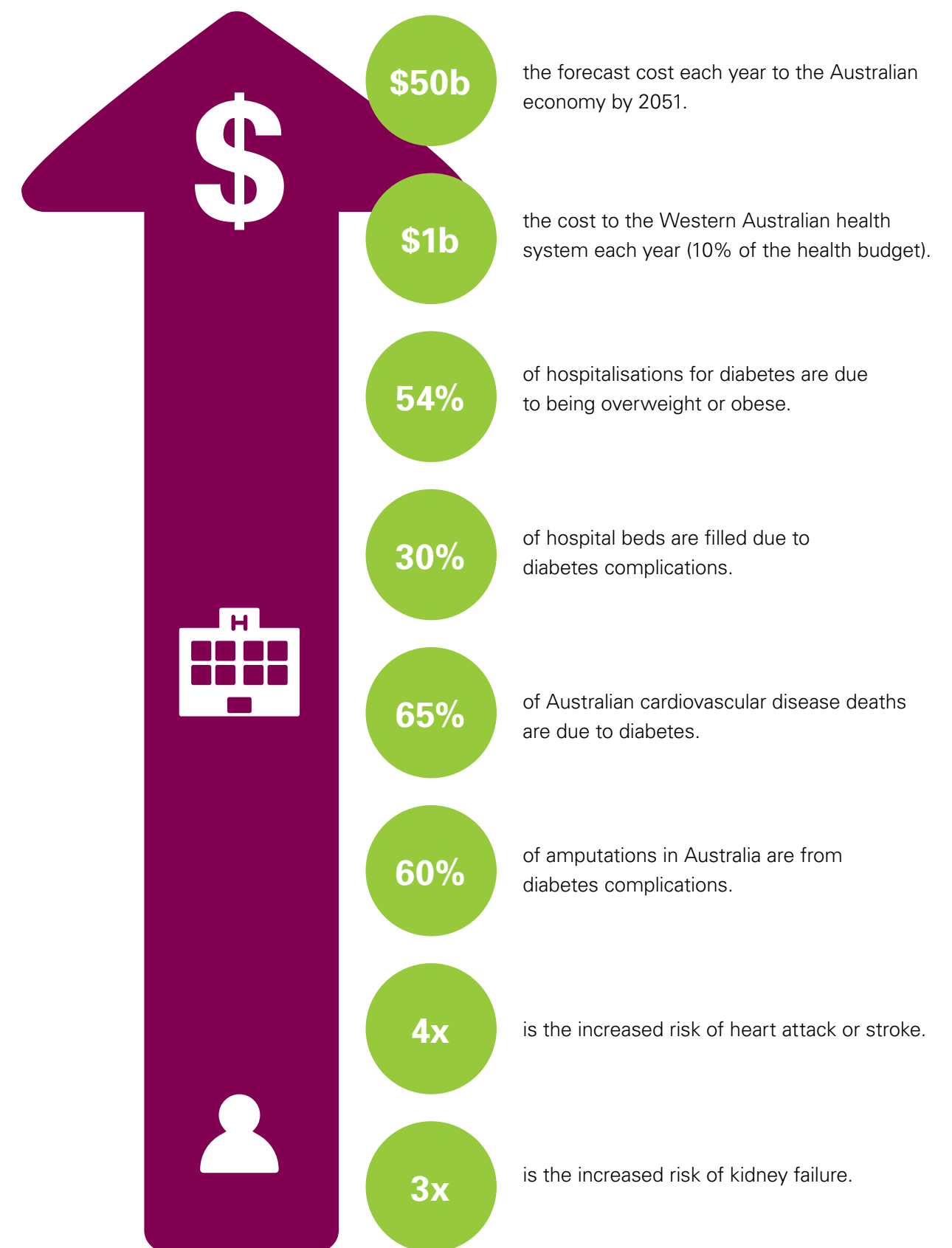
Nearly half a million West Australians live with either prediabetes or diabetes (type 1, type 2 or gestational diabetes). Every day another 25 people are diagnosed. There is currently no known cure and, if left undiagnosed or unmanaged, it can lead to life-changing complications.

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 marks 100 years since the discovery of insulin. We've been marking the occasion by inviting people living with diabetes to share their stories with us and each other. 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 believe in helping people with diabetes to take charge of their health.

The cost of diabetes to the health system

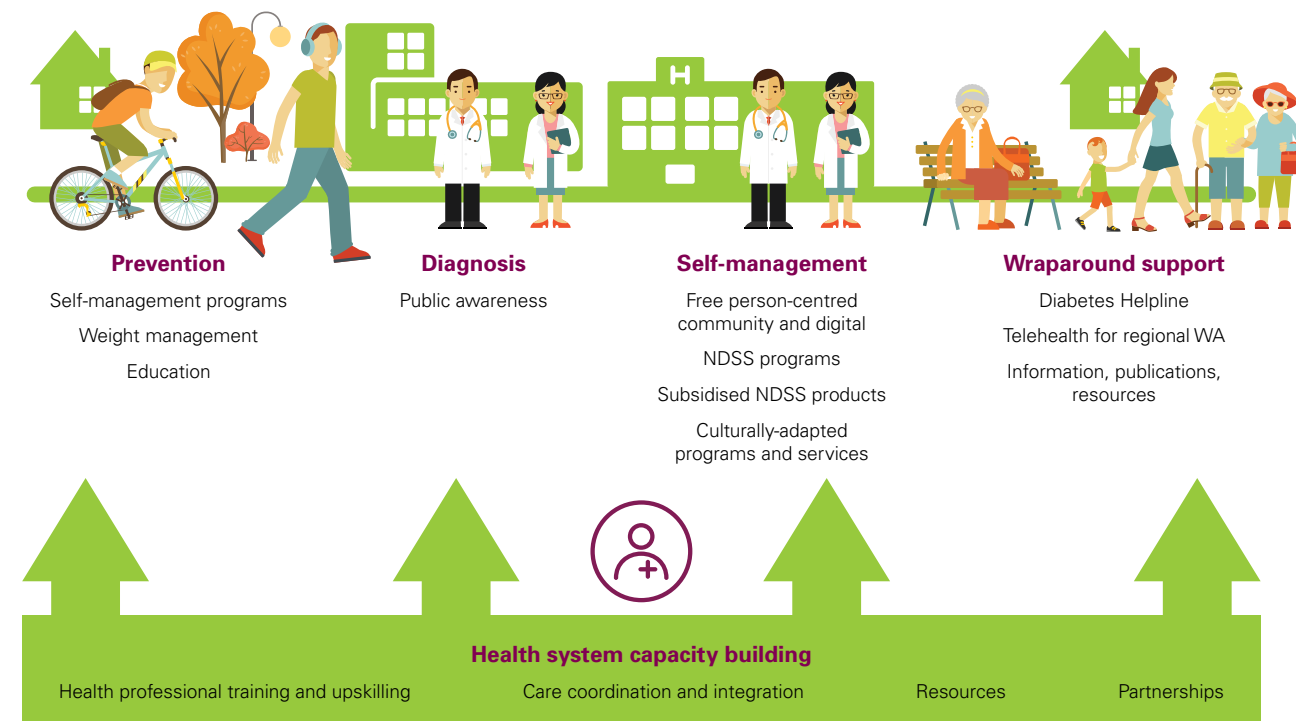


WHAT WE DO

Our mission is to provide the essential support, education and services that will allow people affected by diabetes to live full, healthy lives.

Diabetes WA is a leading and innovative health services provider. We are working to reduce the impact of diabetes on the lives of West Australians and to build a more equitable health system in our state.

- ▶ Prevention
- ▶ Diagnosis
- ▶ Self-management
- ▶ Support



Our values

- ▶ Empowering people to successfully manage their diabetes
- ▶ Focusing on evidence-based solutions
- ▶ Leading through collaboration with members, communities and organisations
- ▶ A commitment to excellence through quality improvement

How we do it



TARGETS

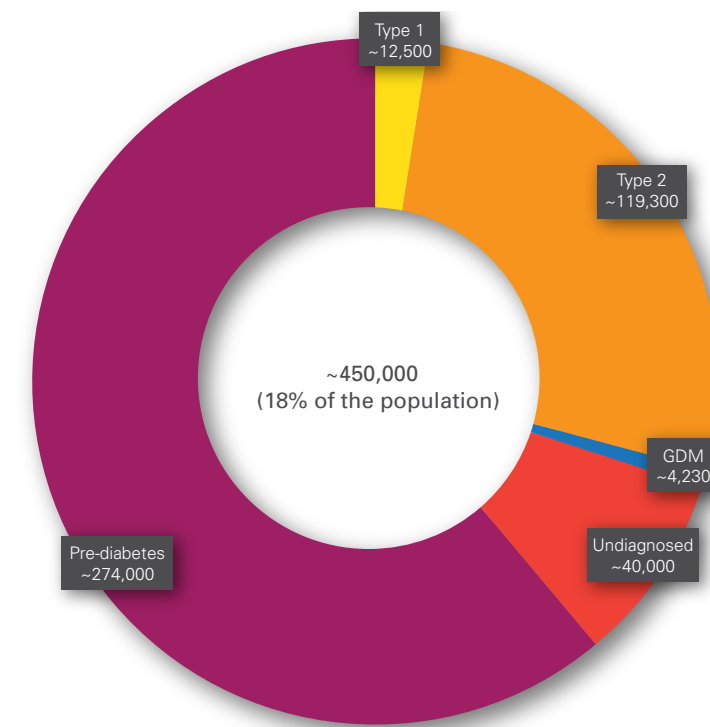
Empower and activate

Our programs and support services are designed to empower West Australians to take an active role in managing their health.



Our focus

- **Prevention** The link between obesity, prediabetes and type 2 diabetes is well-established. Around 16% of the WA population has prediabetes, with 30% likely to develop type 2 diabetes within five years. We're working to help West Australians find the weight-management tools they need, including nutrition, physical activity and emotional well-being.
- **Diagnosis** A third of people with type 2 diabetes are undiagnosed. A prompt diagnosis is essential for reducing or preventing complications. Our education programs and support services play a vital role in this.
- **Person-centred care** We're working to ensure all West Australians have access to diabetes self-management education and culturally secure care.
- **Gestational diabetes** Gestational diabetes is the fastest growing type of diabetes, putting mothers and their children at increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. We're raising awareness of diabetes during pregnancy and making sure affected women have access to the care and support they need.
- **Aboriginal health** Diabetes is one of the leading causes of death among the Aboriginal population. Aboriginal Australians living in rural and remote Communities are nearly four times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than non-Aboriginal Australians. We're also seeing a worrying rise in rates of type 2 diabetes in Aboriginal youth.



- Nearly half a million West Australians are at risk of, or live with diabetes. Every day an additional 25 people are diagnosed with either type 1, type 2 or gestational diabetes.
- Around 16% of the WA population over 25 years of age have pre-diabetes, 30% of whom are likely to develop type 2 diabetes within five years.
- A third of those with type 2 diabetes are undiagnosed. A timely diagnosis and access to the right information and support is essential to help people manage their condition and ensure complications can be reduced or prevented.
- Gestational diabetes is the fastest growing type of diabetes, putting mothers and their children at increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
- Half the people diagnosed with type 1 diabetes are children.

IMPACT

Finding a better way

When Rachel Davies was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes at the age of 18, she knew life would never be the same.

"I was shocked and really depressed by it, fearful of what it meant for my future quality of life," Rachel says of her diagnosis. "But I was determined to tackle it head on. I lost 25kg within a year of first being diagnosed."

One of Rachel's biggest challenges since her diagnosis has been making better food choices, particularly when dining out at restaurants.

"The biggest challenge for me was to find a way to consolidate who I am as a food-lover, with my health needs as a person with diabetes. It's taken me many years and I still struggle with it sometimes, but I've learnt to be kind to myself, and not to beat myself up about letting myself enjoy indulgent foods sometimes."

Participating in Diabetes WA's topic-specific Smarts workshops, as well as the popular type 2 self-management education

workshop DESMOND, has helped Rachel get a better grasp of diabetes management, from food choices to carbohydrate intake and monitoring blood glucose levels.

Rachel says that, while the self-management education was invaluable, it was also really helpful getting a chance to spend time with other people living with diabetes and being able to share experiences.

"I've found just as much benefit to my mental health as there was to my physical health."

These sessions have helped Rachel develop key lifestyle habits that help her keep on top of her diabetes.

"I stay conscious of what I eat and try to make smart food choices, I eat at regular meal times with snacks in between and most days follow a pretty consistent food routine," she says.

"I used to hate exercise, but now I see it as a means to an end, a way to give me more freedom with food, which makes me happy."

Educate and activate

We know that living with diabetes is a lifelong health journey. Effective diabetes self-management is the best way to live a full, healthy life.

Our programs are person-centred and culturally appropriate, supporting West Australians to self-manage their health. Self-management is known to lower the sense of distress 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. Our programs give people with diabetes the choice of how they want to engage in diabetes education, with sessions available digitally or as community workshops.

DESMOND

Available for free through the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS), DESMOND is Australia's leading type 2 diabetes self-management program.

As the local NDSS agent, Diabetes WA has been able to provide life-changing self-management education to West Australians across the state, with a continued focus on 'hotspots' that have relatively high numbers of people living with type 2 diabetes. In the Perth metropolitan area, 700 people attended the 101 DESMOND sessions we ran. A further 290 people attended the 47 sessions we ran in regional Western Australia.

"I found DESMOND immensely helpful, both in terms of a reminder of the things I have in my control to be able to manage diabetes, and also for the reassurance and comfort of being in a group of people who understand what life with diabetes is like"

– Rachel, type 2 diabetes

MyDESMOND

Where you live shouldn't make a difference to the care you receive. Developed at the request of the Australian Department of Health, our online version of DESMOND allows us to support West Australians with diabetes in places services have traditionally struggled to reach.

Since launching in April 2020, we have worked with our counterparts in South Australia (Diabetes SA) and the Northern Territory (Healthy Living NT) to fast-track the availability of MyDESMOND. In the 2020/21 period, 3,754 people registered for the program. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants reporting a greater sense of empowerment around their diabetes and a significant reduction in diabetes-related stress.

"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



DAFNE

We know that only 15% of people with type 1 diabetes reach vital insulin management targets.

Our Dose Adjustment for Normal Eating (DAFNE) group workshops provide strategies to safely manage insulin doses according to food intake, exercise, illness and alcohol intake.

"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

Diabetes WA Live webinars

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

These webinars were well-received when launched in 2020 and have proved a great success this year, helping us to reach regional or isolated audiences who might otherwise have struggled to attend our education sessions.

QUICK SNAPSHOT

- ▶ 1980 people joined our digital activities this year, including webinars, online support groups, Facebook Live sessions and information sessions.

"The webinars reinforce that we are not alone in this fight. We have a network of friendly staff available that understands our condition,"

– Participant



Smarts workshops

The more you know, the smarter your choices. The Smart program workshops are half-day sessions designed to educate and empower people around specific diabetes issues.

- ▶ **ShopSmart** Run either as a supermarket tour or classroom workshop, this session empowers people to make informed choices about the food they buy in their weekly shop.
- ▶ **CarbSmart** This session provides all the facts on carbohydrates: why the body needs them, when to eat them and how to make better choices.
- ▶ **FootSmart** Foot health has been a major focus for Diabetes WA this year. This hands-on session empowers people with diabetes with the knowledge and skills they need to develop good habits, choose better footwear and lower their risk of foot complications.
- ▶ **MonitorSmart** This session explains the importance of monitoring blood glucose levels in managing diabetes, offering insights into the impact of different foods, behaviours and events.
- ▶ **MedSmart** Designed to empower people with type 2 diabetes to manage their prescribed medications, this session provides the facts on common diabetes meds, how they work and why they should be taken as prescribed.

QUICK SNAPSHOT

- ▶ A total of 1108 people with diabetes attended the 171 topic specific programs (including Smarts workshops) we ran this year, 879 in the metro area and 229 in regional Western Australia.



Diabetes WA also presents workshops on a range of other topics.

- ▶ **Ready, Set, Go – Let's Move** This session aims to help people make exercise part of their daily routine, by providing tips to stay motivated.
- ▶ **Living with Insulin** Covering the different products and equipment available, as well as the importance of maintaining blood glucose levels, this session provides a better understanding of insulin.
- ▶ **Insulin Pump Workshop** This practical session educates people about how to get the most out of their insulin pump.



Get to know DESMOND, get to know your diabetes

Secret Harbour couple Jane Duncan and Wayne Beard attended one of Diabetes WA's DESMOND (Diabetes Education Self-Management for Ongoing and Newly Diagnosed) workshops this year. Jane says the experience has transformed their outlook on diabetes.

I had to pretty much drag Wayne to the DESMOND session. He felt he didn't need to go, because he is managing his diabetes, but it was really good for us as a couple.

We both had a great day. It was very informative for myself as a supporter — we asked questions, were given answers, given ideas to change out foods and encouraged to think about what else we could do to keep Wayne's blood glucose levels down — exercise, stop smoking, shop differently and much, much more!

We had a fair few laughs throughout the day, mostly at Wayne and his lack of veggies. Wayne actually walked away saying the course was interesting and that he would recommend it to anyone!

I got a lot out of it and a better understanding, especially being a non-diabetic. Even though it was a full day, I felt the

time went quite fast and Wayne took away a few interesting new facts.

I think people should do this course shortly after being diagnosed to help themselves and their supporters to gain information, understanding, and knowledge about everything regarding type 2 diabetes.



Support

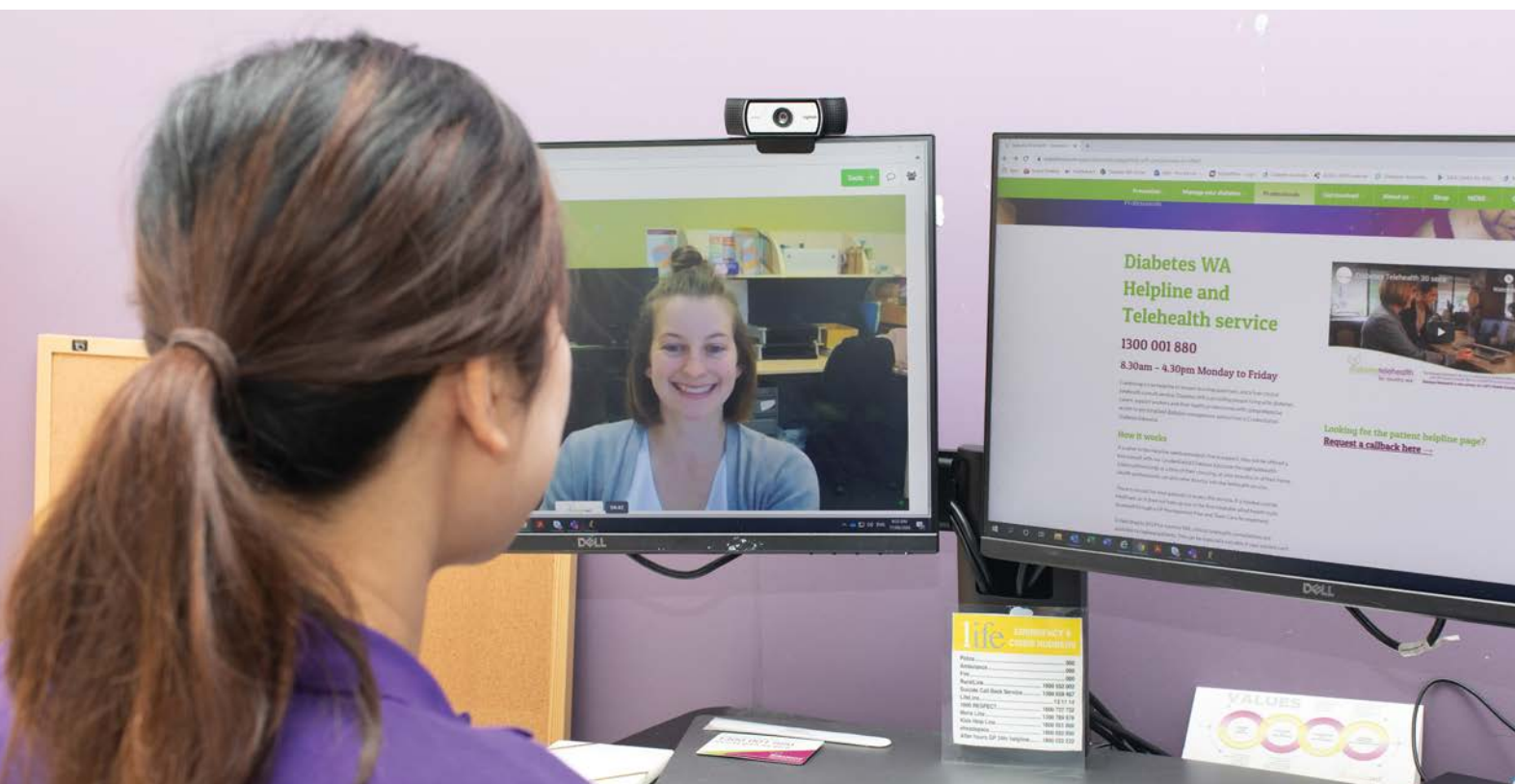
We are proud to offer free on-demand support and advice to any West Australian with a phone or computer.

West Australians with diabetes 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 Credentialed Diabetes Educator for diabetes advice and support

These services have become more important during the COVID-19 pandemic, where advice

for people living with chronic conditions has been fast-changing and causing anxiety across the diabetes community.

Our Diabetes Telehealth Service (DTS) 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 the surge in calls.



Diabetes WA Helpline

Person-centred care is at the heart of everything we do. Our Diabetes WA Helpline provides education, advice and support to people living with diabetes, and their carers, health professionals and support workers across WA.

Our team has taken more than 12,000 calls from West Australians over the past year, with the majority concerning type 2 diabetes. Around 2500 of those calls were put through to a specialised diabetes educator. COVID-related calls continue, although they have dropped significantly since July last year. Other common questions involved access to medications and pump supplies and sick day management. We also received a significant amount of calls from women diagnosed with Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM).

Our feedback from members is overwhelmingly positive, demonstrating how our Helpline continues to be a highly valued and essential service that is meeting the needs of West Australians living with or

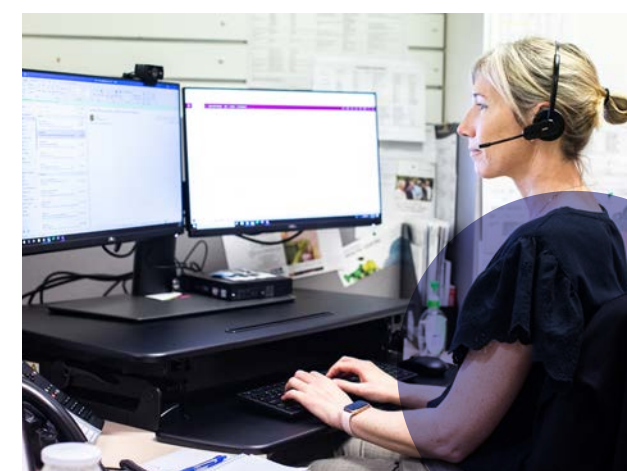
impacted by diabetes. Around 10% of our calls come from regional and rural areas.

"I will ring the helpline if I have any further issues. In actual fact, it will be my 'first port of call'"

– Caller

"I was in a fairly uncomfortable state of mind and physical stress when I called the helpline. I felt the educator dealt with my situation pragmatically. I definitely felt a lot calmer after the call."

– Caller



"I am grateful for the service that is put there for us. To help us understand something we know very little about. To hear a sweet comforting voice answering all the questions, slowly removes fears of 'what do I do now?'"

Diabetes Telehealth Service

Accessing diabetes care can be difficult for people living and working in regional WA. Our Diabetes Telehealth Service offers specialist support, education and health professional training for West Australians who don't have access to diabetes services in their area.

Last year, our Telehealth service helped more than 500 people with over 1000 appointments saving 341,737km of travel for consumers across the state.

This makes an extraordinary difference to the lives of many West Australians and we're grateful for the continued funding from the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) and the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA).

Supporting women with Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) continues to be a major focus for our telehealth services. We are working to bridge the gap in antenatal care in regional WA, referring regional cases to metropolitan hospitals where necessary. We are running workshops, developed in collaboration with King Edward Memorial Hospital, for midwives in remote areas to increase their understanding of GDM.

Additionally, our free, GP-referred Diabetes Telehealth Endocrinology Service (DTES) continues to provide specialist care for complex cases. Dr Meg Henze has been driving the growth of this service over the past year.

"As I live in a regional area it is always good to have Telehealth services. It is a very helpful service to be able to discuss any concerns I may have"

– Caller

"My diabetes educator has been excellent – she is caring and knowledgeable and listens to what I have to say, trying hard to address my concerns and answer my questions."

– Caller



Rural and remote product supply

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

Our support for people living with diabetes in rural and remote areas of WA has increased over the past year, with our warehouses and online shop now supplying to 110 Aboriginal Medical Services (AMES).

In the 2021 fiscal year, we supplied almost 25,000 diabetes products, including free

blood glucose meters, to regional, remote and Aboriginal communities. We've continued to work as an NDSS Access Point under the Regional and Remote contract, supplying products worth more than \$1.4 million.



Community

Our priority is engaging and activating the WA diabetes community. We want to raise more awareness and understanding of diabetes and its impact on people's everyday lives.

Partnering with WA hospitals, local governments, schools and community organisations, we provide a range of activities including awareness sessions in schools and workplaces, a kids camp, 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 even 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.

Relaunched last year, 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 is part of the NDSS.

We are working with the Perth Children's Hospital (PCH) and the WA Department of Education to make this program available to all schools so that 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 each year connects and supports young children with type 1 diabetes. This year's 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



ADVOCACY

Cecelia Tigan, a Bardi Gawi woman from the Kimberley, lives with type 2 diabetes and worries about the future of Aboriginal children in her community.

Cecelia 'Lala' Tigan, traditionally known as Jidmaarnjoon, is a proud Bardi Gawi woman from the Djarindjin community in Dampier Peninsula, 200 kilometres from Broome. Cecelia was first diagnosed with Gestational Diabetes (GDM) when she was pregnant with her fourth child in her early thirties.

Women are 10 times as likely to develop type 2 diabetes within five to 10 years after giving birth. The risks are even higher for Aboriginal women who are four times at risk of developing GDM and type 2 diabetes.

For Cecelia, after she gave birth, there was no five to 10 year gap, her diabetes just stayed. She has lived with type 2 diabetes for 15 years now and takes medication and injects insulin once a day. Cecelia doesn't just worry about her own diabetes. As a mother and a teacher's assistant working at a local school, she worries about the children in her community and the unhealthy eating culture these children and her own are surrounded by.

"When you drive past McDonalds or any fast-food place, there are so many cars in the drive through. These kinds of food have impacted our lives today. It's easier to get fast food than prepare a good healthy meal. Here you see babies eating sweets before they can even walk."

There is evidence that Aboriginal children are eight times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than non-indigenous children, affecting them disproportionately with a more

aggressive diabetes that tends to lead to higher rates of complications in youth and even death.

Cecelia said there is a critical need for school programs to teach Aboriginal kids the importance of healthy eating, a lesson that can determine the life expectancy of children in her community.

"Where we live, we have junk food surrounding us, the things kids buy from stores is ridiculous," Cecelia said. "We need to do something about the kids, to get them active again with competitive sport, eating good food, getting them off smoking and drugs."

General Manager of Health Services Deborah Schofield said the cycle of aggressive diabetes with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers and children has devastating outcomes. Diabetes WA has made it part of their strategic direction to work with the leadership of Aboriginal Community Health Organisations to build an Aboriginal Health Workforce of Diabetes Educators and Telehealth Aboriginal Support Workers to provide culturally secure diabetes care.

"This is a complicated problem and there are no quick-fixes but we have to start prevention as early as possible to break the intergenerational cycle of diabetes in pregnancy – we begin with empowering women with the awareness, education and support they need to manage their diabetes and promote life-long healthy eating habits in their children," Deborah said.

"We've started the work but we want to make it bigger and better, and this is why we need more funding in this area."





Aboriginal health

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

There is no easy solution, but Diabetes WA is working directly with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health organisations

to better understand Community issues and support their work delivering local diabetes healthcare.

Aboriginal Workforce Development Project

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 diabetes.

Diabetes WA is working to train and mentor Aboriginal health workers across the state to deliver the DESY program in their communities. Aboriginal health workers are in the best position to deliver culturally safe content to help people in their community to manage their diabetes journey.

This project will target '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 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 (ACCHOs) collaborating to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia.

QUICK SNAPSHOT

- ▶ This year 238 people attended our Aboriginal Community education events, 340 people were helped in our outreach clinics and we reached 1308 people through radio interviews and social media.
- ▶ 246 people attended our DESY program sessions. 50% of these people were from regional and remote areas such as Beagle Bay and Bidyadanga.

Building capacity in our health system

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.

GP online training in weight management

Conversations about Weight is an online education package for general clinicians. It 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) being overweight and obesity. Each of the six modules 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 WAPHA and launching at a later stage.



DESMOND training

This year, we successfully trialled taking our DESMOND training online, which has allowed us not only to train facilitators 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 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 throughout their work with the DESMOND program.



North Metropolitan Foot Initiative

A foot injury can quickly escalate to loss of limb or a life-threatening situation for a person living with diabetes. There are more than 4,400 amputations every year in Australia as a result of diabetes, which is the second highest rate in the developed world. The total cost of **high-risk foot (HRF)** hospital admissions in Western Australia was \$150 million in 2015. From 2003 to 2015 HRF hospital admissions increased by 60%.

We know 80% of lower limb amputations are preventable, so Diabetes WA has partnered with WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), in collaboration with Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital Multi-Disciplinary Foot Unit (SCGH MDFU), to capture the lived experience of people with diabetes-related foot disease and their health professionals to inform future initiatives.

Diabetes WA's Credentialed Diabetes Educator and Registered Nurse, Shona Vigus coordinated the project and a consultation process that entailed interviewing 25 people with diabetes and 52 Health Care Professionals (HCPs) from a wide range of disciplines and settings. This provided incredible insight into the obstacles and barriers experienced by people with high-risk feet when accessing care. While this was the first step in improving timely access to foot care, urgent solutions are still required for people with high-risk feet to receive the right care, at the right time, in the right place.

Diabetes upskilling workshops and training

We regularly host one day update sessions for health professionals. During the pandemic, we developed Diabetes WA LIVE for Health Professionals – a one-hour webinar series including a Q&A session that was then made available online. Our digital sessions have continued to prove popular this year, with more than half of the 1816 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 WA Primary Health Alliance and Royal Australian College of General Practitioners to support and empower GPs, nurses and health professionals. This year, through our digital communications and *Diabetes Matters* magazine, we reached a total of 26,172 primary care health professionals.

Facilitator Foundations and Fidelity (FFF) and Smarts training

Our FFF Train the Trainer program enables FFF training and assessments to be held in WA and around Australia, providing the skills health professionals need to deliver the Smarts suite of programs. This year, we trained 38 new local health professionals to deliver the Smarts programs across Australia, with a particular focus on training professionals in the South West, Midwest and Great Southern regions of WA, enabling us to reach even more people living with diabetes in regional WA.

Taking baby steps to prevent diabetes

Shae Maree Bacon was upset to learn she had Gestational Diabetes (GDM) but was more upset by feeling pressured to eat foods her body could not tolerate.

Excited to have her first baby, 31-year-old Shae Maree Bacon was sadly disappointed with the lack of personalised care she received with regards to her dietary plan at her hospital when she was diagnosed with Gestational Diabetes (GDM).

Diagnosed at 30 weeks pregnant, Shae said finding out she had GDM and had to inject insulin into her body was very upsetting, but the most negative experience was how she felt her GDM team at the hospital didn't really listen to her when she told them about her food intolerance.

"I felt like they weren't really listening to me as they didn't ask me what alternative foods I could have and adjust my dietary plan to what I could eat. There was pressure to eat foods I couldn't tolerate but my

baby's growth
and weight
was still



progressing normally when I didn't eat those foods." Shae said.

Diabetes WA General Manager Sophie McGough said while GDM is a serious condition and the mother's diet should be monitored closely, the hospital dietitian could have tailored Shae's dietary plan towards foods she could eat but time constraints and pressure on staff in public hospitals means health professionals are limited to how much they can tailor advice for each individual.

Discovering what works for your body and taking control of your own health journey remains important throughout pregnancy – and afterwards. The Baby Steps program, adapted to an Australian setting by Diabetes WA, empowers women who have had gestational diabetes to make lifestyle changes that will work for them in the hope of preventing type 2 diabetes later in life.

"A one size fits all approach doesn't always work for everyone," Sophie says. "It's crucial we take a more personalised approach to helping people living with diabetes and in this case women who have been diagnosed with gestational diabetes."

Prevention

Diabetes is a lifetime journey. While it can be managed, the most cost-effective way to reduce the impact of type 2 diabetes on the WA community and our health system is prevention. Our programs and workshops are designed to activate awareness of diabetes and empower people to lower their risk.

Let's Prevent

This targeted program empowers people at risk of type 2 diabetes or cardiovascular diseases to make the lifestyle changes they need to improve their health.

Funded by the WA Department of Health, Let's Prevent is a free, year-long program for people living in the South West. Based on scientific evidence around health psychology and behavioural change, the program has been a great success, with the majority of participants undertaking crucial lifestyle changes to meet their health goals.

The impact of this kind of change is immense. If all adults who are overweight or living with obesity reduced their body mass index (BMI) by 1kg per sqm, it would save the health system \$95.7 million by 2026.

This year, we have been expanding the reach of the program from the South West to the Midwest of WA, allowing us to reach a total of 119 participants across 21 sessions.

In January 2021, we received a Lotterywest grant to adapt the program into a digital format, ready for launch in January 2022, which increases the reach of the program to people across the state.





Total Meal Replacement pilot program

Successful weight management is a crucial part of managing your diabetes journey. We want to make sure people with diabetes have the support they need to make successful weight management a reality.

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 (WAPHA) 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 with a BMI greater than 30 or, if they have an existing health-related condition, 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. They also received training in the medical management required during supported weight management using the Total Meal Replacement program to help give people the best chance of success.

"I am really happy with the results and all the support I got from Diabetes WA. I felt that I was not alone at any time during those six months and it really helped me feel secure and confident enough to push myself and not give up. I am not going to lie, the first eight weeks were very hard, especially the first two, but at the end of the day, it was worth it. I hope you can continue with the program and support more people that are in need."

– Participant

Baby Steps

Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) is the fastest growing type of diabetes in Australia, affecting thousands of pregnant women. We're taking steps to turn this around.

Bringing together extensive evidence-based content, Baby Steps is for women who have had GDM and is designed to help prevent type 2 diabetes or future recurrences of GDM. It empowers and educates women to change their behaviours to create a healthier lifestyle. It recognises there is no "one size fits all" approach to diabetes prevention or management and acknowledges that peer support is key when it comes to successful health management.

Over the past financial year, we reached 106 participants, who were able to connect with each other via the chat forum.

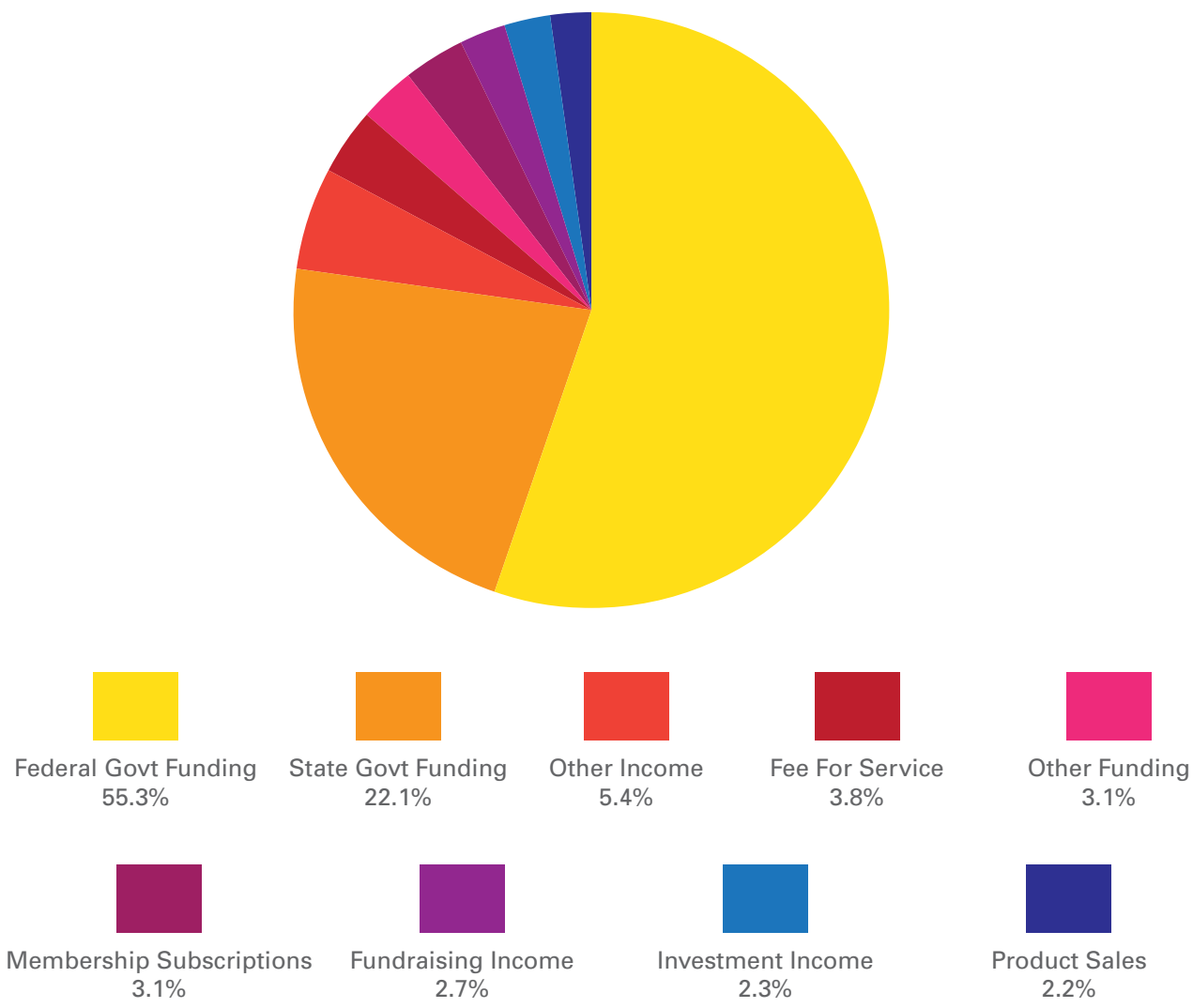
Many participants describe the program as a "mother's group but for gestational diabetes". Participants also reported a significant decrease in weight, a significant increase in fruit and vegetable intake and a greater amount of physical activity.

We are continuing to work with the Australian Government to make Baby Steps available nationally via the NDSS.

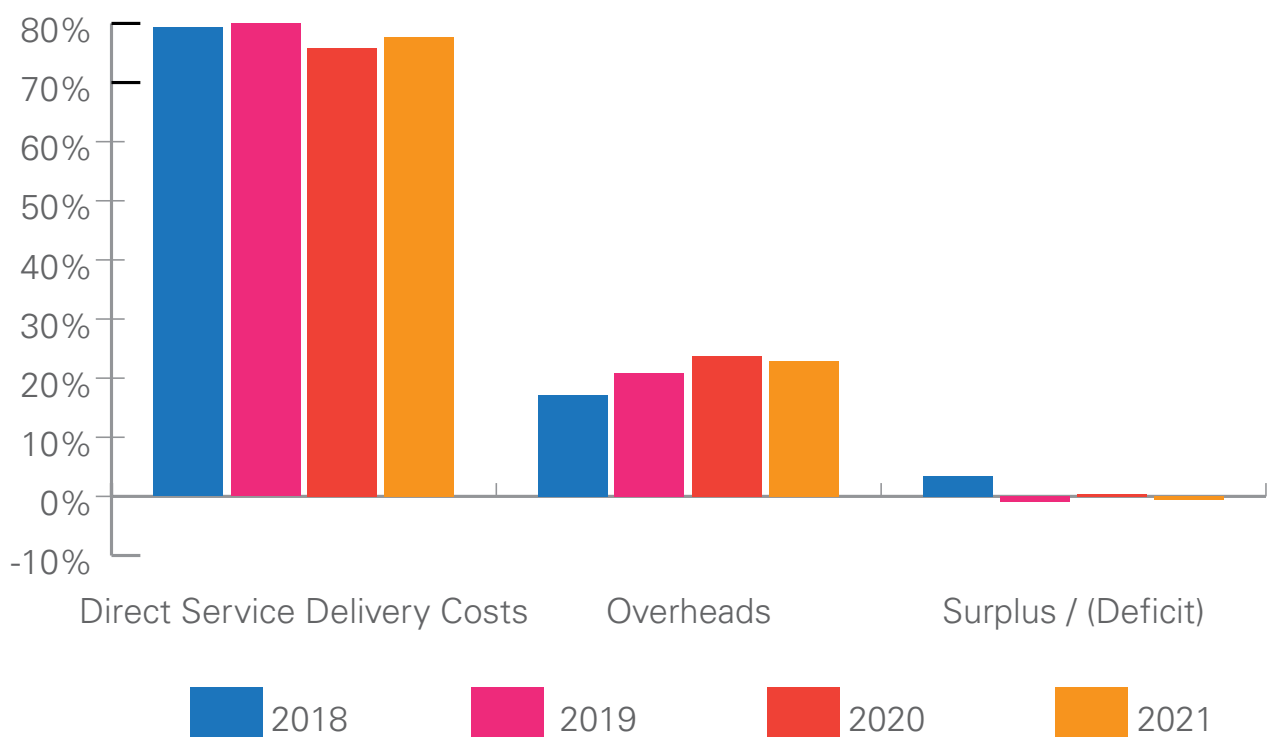
"Before doing the program I thought little changes wouldn't make much of a difference to your health, but they do. The program breaks it all down, makes it manageable and makes it seem like making those changes isn't a big deal."

– Kailin, gestational diabetes

Sources of revenue



How the revenue has been spent





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



Follow us on social media.



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A copy of the audited financial statements can be found on our website.

Visit diabeteswa.com.au/annual-review