



# Strategic plan

2025 - 2030

Diabetes WA acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and live and pays respect to the Elders – past and present – for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our region.

We are proud and committed to embrace the spirit of reconciliation and learn more from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community about how best to improve the health, social and economic outcomes of First Nations' people.

Diabetes WA respects and celebrates all forms of diversity.

We welcome and value people from all walks of life to access our services and join our team.



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## About us

Diabetes WA stands as Western Australia's peak body devoted to supporting people affected by diabetes. With a proud history spanning decades, our organisation has grown from a small community organisation into a trusted leader in diabetes care, education and advocacy across the state.

Our roots are grounded in a vision to support everyone living with or at risk of diabetes. Over the years, we have built strong partnerships with individuals, families, healthcare professionals, researchers and policymakers, ensuring our work remains focused on real community needs.

Today, Diabetes WA offers a wide range of services to help people manage their diabetes and improve their quality of life. From our Diabetes Advice and Information Line—which provides reliable, up-to-date guidance—to specialist clinics in metropolitan and regional areas, we connect individuals with essential care and support. Our reach extends to rural and remote communities, both via virtual and in-person care, breaking down barriers to access and ensuring no one is left behind.

We lead innovative programs such as Diabetes Connect, bridging the gap between general practitioners and specialists to deliver expert care closer to home. Our self-management programs empower people to take charge of their health, equipping them with knowledge, skills and confidence for daily living.

Through advocacy, education and collaboration, Diabetes WA works tirelessly to create a connected, person-centred system of care, improving outcomes and supporting Western Australians to live well with diabetes.



## Our mission

Our mission is to improve the lives of individuals affected by diabetes through comprehensive, person-centred care, education and support.

We are committed to advancing innovative solutions that empower people to manage their diabetes, prevent complications and live full, healthy lives.

## Our vision

### Supporting people with diabetes to live well and thrive

“We see the difference that community-based support can make every single day. The work done by community health organisations like ours often makes the difference that keeps someone well at home and out of hospital.”  
**Melanie Gates, CEO**



## Our services and support



Virtual care & telehealth



Diabetes WA Helpline



Awareness & engagement



Diabetes WA Connect



Metropolitan & outreach clinics



Self-management programs

# Our people

Our people are the driving force of our organisation and bring our purpose and values to life each day. People join us because they want to make a positive impact in our community, and they stay because we ask them to bring their whole selves to work.

Our excellence, care, integrity and creativity come from our team and their commitment to their work. We sincerely believe that high quality care can only be delivered as a result of the strengths and passion of our people.

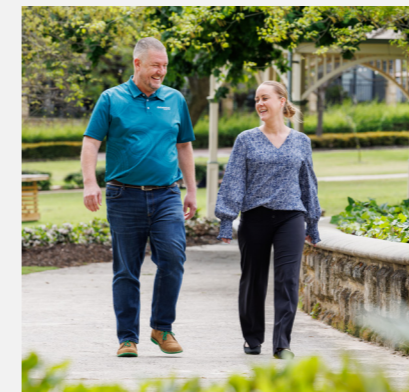
We embrace diversity and inclusion, and welcome team members from all backgrounds, faiths and life experiences. We seek to support and empower all of our people, working collaboratively as a team to provide excellence in care and make a lasting impact.



## Our values

Our values and beliefs guide Diabetes WA, shaping our decisions and actions to ensure safe, high-quality diabetes support and care. They keep our consumers, community and team at the heart of everything we do, driving our success now and in the future.

# Our values and beliefs



### Caring for People

Empowering individuals living with diabetes with respect, professionalism and empathy.



### Solution Focused

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



### Committed to Excellence

Priding ourselves in high quality work and efficient use of resources.



### Leading through Collaboration

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



## Who do we support?

Diabetes WA supports all Western Australians living with or at risk of diabetes, regardless of where they are on their journey.

Diabetes is a chronic condition that affects how the body processes blood sugar (glucose). There are several types of diabetes, each with its own causes, symptoms and treatments.



### Pre-diabetes

Pre-diabetes is a condition where blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be classified as Type 2 diabetes. Individuals with Pre-diabetes are at increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.



### Gestational diabetes

Approximately 15% of mothers will be diagnosed with Gestational diabetes

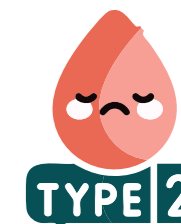
Gestational diabetes occurs when the body is unable to produce enough insulin to meet the increased need of pregnancy. This type of diabetes typically resolves after the baby is born, but it can increase the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes later in life.



### Type 1 diabetes

Approximately 10% of people living in Western Australia with Diabetes have Type 1 diabetes

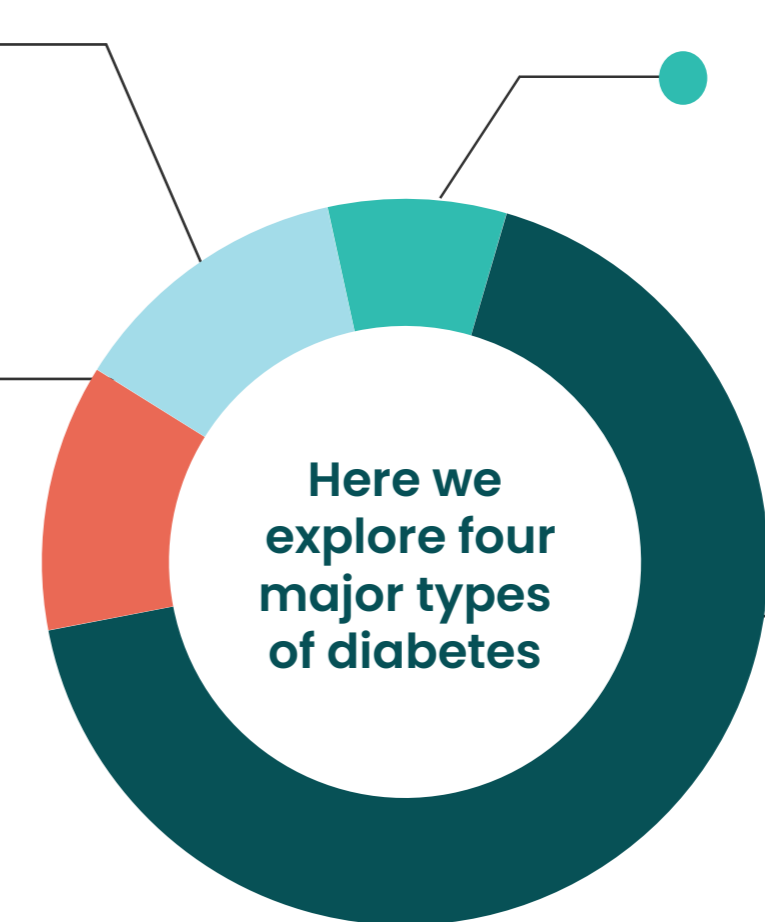
Type 1 diabetes is a condition where the pancreas produces little to no insulin. Insulin is a hormone necessary for glucose to enter cells and provide energy. Whilst commonly diagnosed in childhood, adults can also be diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes.



### Type 2 diabetes

Approximately 85% of People living in Western Australia with diabetes have Type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes, typically developing in adults over the age of 45, although it is increasingly seen in younger individuals, including children and adolescents. In Type 2 diabetes, the body either resists the effects of insulin or doesn't produce enough insulin to maintain normal glucose levels.



Here we explore four major types of diabetes

- Type 1 diabetes
- Gestational diabetes
- Type 2 diabetes
- Pre-diabetes

# Closing the gap in diabetes

Diabetes and its complications are disproportionately impacting on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Diabetes was the second highest cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in WA in 2017.



Studies show Aboriginal people are three times more likely to have type 2 diabetes compared to other Australians (Baker IDI, 2012).

The depth of social and economic impacts of diabetes is hidden as generations of Aboriginal people now live with diabetes and its complications as part of everyday life.<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Burrow S, Ride K (2016) Review of diabetes among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet.

<sup>2</sup>Norman et al, 2010. High rates of amputation among Indigenous people in Western Australia, Medical Journal of Australia

Prevalence of diabetes as high as **30% of the population** in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities



**6 times** more likely to die from diabetes than non-Indigenous Australians



Almost **twice as likely** to develop gestational diabetes as non-indigenous women

Have the **highest rate of kidney** failure in Australia



**38 times more** than other Australians to have lower limb amputations due to diabetes





## The challenge

Diabetes is one of Western Australia's most pressing and complex health challenges. Too often, people face fragmented care, long wait times or support that doesn't reflect their lived experience.

## Our aims

Looking ahead, our strategy is anchored in five pivotal pillars that will shape the future of diabetes care in Western Australia. Each pillar represents a forward-thinking commitment to harnessing innovation, empowering our health workforce and driving systemic change.

These strategic priorities are designed to anticipate emerging needs, ensure our services remain adaptable and effective and build a sustainable foundation for generations to come — so that every person affected by diabetes can access the care and support they deserve.



# Our ambitions

Over the next 5 years, we will:

Strengthen connected diabetes care by integrating our services within the broader health system to ensure continuity, reduce duplication and improve outcomes.

Prioritise collaboration across government, health providers, researchers and communities to align efforts and amplify impact.

Design services shaped by the voices of people with diabetes, ensuring care is timely, culturally safe and responsive to complex needs.

Focus on the health workforce, supporting professionals with the confidence and skills to provide high-quality diabetes care.

Advocate for systemic change to make diabetes support more equitable, accessible and sustainable across WA.

Our strategy is built on a commitment to listening, partnering and leading – to ensure **no one is left behind in their diabetes journey.**

We will know we have succeeded when:

People living with diabetes experience care that is connected, timely and responsive, and feel informed, confident and supported to manage their condition and live well.

Access to diabetes care, education and technology is equitable and consistent, regardless of location or circumstance, with increased reach and engagement across the community.

Preventable diabetes-related complications and avoidable hospital admissions decline through earlier, proactive care, supported by stronger engagement with primary care.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience culturally safe care shaped by community voices, with improved and more equitable health outcomes.

Care across the system is guided by evidence, lived experience and shared learning, with data and insights, informing policy, funding and service design, and organisations working together around shared priorities.

Diabetes WA is recognised as the peak body for diabetes in Western Australia, with strong visibility across primary care and growing participation from people living with diabetes.



## Engage and empower the community

### Create a connected community and elevate consumer voices

Empowering and engaging consumers is at the heart of our mission at Diabetes WA.

We believe that by turning up the volume on the diabetes consumer voice and actively engaging with our consumers in purposeful ways, we can co-design solutions that are fit for purpose and drive meaningful action in each of our strategic focus areas.

Our commitment ensures that our consumers are not only heard but also supported through community-based groups, peer support networks, appropriate services and advocacy opportunities.

### Focus areas

- 1 Amplify the diabetes consumer voice to influence decisions and service design.
- 2 Co-design solutions with consumers to ensure relevance and cultural safety.
- 3 Expand community-based peer support networks for connection and empowerment.
- 4 Increase access to advocacy opportunities.
- 5 Continue to build capacity for meaningful consumer engagement across the organisation.



# Research and innovate

Support breakthrough innovations, treatments and ultimately the cure for the diabetes community

Diabetes WA is committed to supporting advancements in diabetes care by building strategic partnerships and collaborations that drive research, innovation and real-world impact.

By closely working with local universities and academic institutions, we aim to propel forward groundbreaking research that addresses critical aspects of diabetes management and care.



We strive to create a culture of innovation that emphasises continuous quality improvement, ensuring that our practices are both evidence-based and at the forefront of future innovations.

Through these collective efforts, we aim to significantly enhance the lives of those living with diabetes and make a lasting impact on the broader diabetes community.



### Focus areas

- 1 Build partnerships and collaborations to drive research and innovation.
- 2 Strengthen collaborations with academic and industry partners to advance research and innovation in diabetes care.

- 3 Create a culture of innovation and continuous quality improvement.
- 4 Enhance evidence-based practices and future innovations to benefit the diabetes community across the organisation.
- 5 Implementation of translational research for real-world impact.



## Keeping people out of hospital is key to fixing the health system

“Nobody would deny that WA’s health system is under pressure.

The causes are complex and there are no quick fixes. But those of us working in healthcare also see a big part of the solution in front of us – keeping West Australians out of hospital in the first place.

Too often, conversations about fixing the health system start at the hospital door. But to build a system that is truly sustainable and better able to meet future demand, we need to start much earlier. We need to keep people healthy.”

**Melanie Gates, CEO**



# Strengthen the health workforce

## Build the confidence and capacity of the health workforce to better manage and prevent diabetes

Our strategic vision is to cultivate a future ready, culturally safe health workforce capable of delivering responsive, high quality diabetes care in an increasingly complex healthcare environment.

We recognise the need to strengthen workforce capability across all settings to support early intervention, enable care closer to home and prevent complications and hospitalisations.

Addressing workforce pressures and growing complexity calls for strong partnerships and coordinated leadership to enable clinical excellence, cultural safety and a health system that supports continuous learning and innovation.

As the State’s peak body, we play a critical role in guiding, influencing, and empowering the sector to build capability and confidence across the workforce.

### Focus areas

- 1 Lead quality improvement in diabetes clinical care and self-management for the generalist health workforce.
- 2 Build capacity and support for a rural and remote diabetes workforce.
- 3 Build capacity and support for Primary Care in complex diabetes care.
- 4 Grow an innovative and agile diabetes health workforce to deliver diabetes care differently now and into the future.
- 5 Be leaders in innovative diabetes models of care across the organisation.

# Expand access and support

## Supporting consumers to live well with diabetes

To reach more people, we are expanding our clinical and health services.

We want our care and support to be accessible to everyone with diabetes. By using innovative and evidence-based solutions, we aim to help people manage their condition better, improving their quality of life.

We also work on building partnerships and advocating for health policies that ensure everyone can access the care they need.



## Focus areas

- 1 Expand our clinical services reach to support more consumers living with diabetes.
- 2 Increase reach of services in priority populations.
- 3 Identify, promote and implement innovative and evidence-based solutions to address key diabetes challenges.
- 4 Grow and nurture partnerships to support opportunities for implementation of innovation.

# Advocate and collaborate

Champion change, to tackle the unmet and emerging needs of the diabetes community

By building strong partnerships and a collective voice, we aim to benefit the diabetes community at large.

We are proud to be expanding initiatives such as Diabetes WA Connect, which helps GPs to manage diabetes care without a hospital referral, no matter where they live.

We will continue to call for equitable access to life-changing technologies and medications, alongside vital education programs.

As the peak state body for diabetes, we advocate for a connected health system across Western Australia, where everyone has access to the support and care they deserve.



## Focus areas

- 1 Build strong partnerships and a collective voice for the benefit of the diabetes community.
- 2 Advocate for policies that ensure all individuals have access to quality healthcare services regardless of their socioeconomic status, geographic location or background.
- 3 Support initiatives that make essential medications and treatments affordable and accessible to everyone.
- 4 Promote public health campaigns that raise awareness about diabetes prevention, healthy lifestyles and available healthcare resources.



**Address:** Level 3  
322 Hay Street,  
Subiaco WA 6008

**Phone:** (08) 9325 7699

**Email:** [info@diabeteswa.com.au](mailto:info@diabeteswa.com.au)

**Website:** [www.diabeteswa.com.au](http://www.diabeteswa.com.au)

**diabetesWA**  
by your side

**ABN:** 99 122 315 041

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