

## **Advertisement – Life! Taking Action on Diabetes Brief for stakeholders**

May 2009

### **Background to the type 2 diabetes prevention ‘amputation’ campaign**

The Life! Program is a Victorian Government type 2 diabetes prevention initiative. It aims to provide a lifestyle-behaviour change program to 25,000 high risk Victorians to help delay or prevent diabetes.

#### **Why focus on diabetes prevention?**

- Diabetes currently affects an estimated 1.5 million Australians.<sup>1</sup>
- Only half the people with diabetes know they have it. For every person known to have type 2 diabetes, another is yet to be diagnosed.<sup>1</sup>
- Research shows that most people do not think diabetes is a serious illness, and underestimate their risk.<sup>2,3</sup>
- There are over 700,000 Victorians with pre-diabetes (impaired fasting glucose or impaired glucose tolerance), who are therefore at high risk of developing diabetes.<sup>1</sup>
- Since 2001 there have been 5376 lower limb amputations in Victoria due to type 2 diabetes complications.<sup>4</sup>
- There were 847 amputations due to type 2 diabetes in 07/08, at an annual cost of over \$42.5 million in acute care and rehab costs.<sup>5</sup>

#### **The campaign aims:**

- To encourage people at high risk to ring 13 RISK (13 7475) for more information on type 2 diabetes prevention
- To encourage people to visit their GP to discuss their risk of type 2 diabetes
- To increase the number of people taking part in Life! courses



**Call 13 RISK (13 7475) or visit [goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/life](http://goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/life)**

### **The campaign targets:**

- Adults aged 50 years and over and Aboriginal adults 18 years and over who have pre-diabetes

### **Campaign activities:**

- Television advertising/radio/print

### **When will the advertisements appear on air?**

The campaign will be launched Saturday 9 May 2009 by the Health Minister Daniel Andrews.

### **Who is behind the campaign?**

Diabetes Australia – Vic is the lead agency for the Life! *Taking Action on Diabetes* program which is a Go For Your Life initiative funded by the Victorian Government.

### **Why focus on amputation?**

Neuropathy (or peripheral nerve disease) and blood vessel damage may lead to foot ulceration, serious foot problems and limb amputation. It is estimated that amputation is 15 times more common in people who have diabetes than in people who do not. Diabetes is the most common cause of lower limb amputation. There were 847 lower limb amputations 2007/08 in Victoria. There are 2800 amputations per year in Australia.

### **Do graphic media campaigns trigger behaviour change?**

The QUIT, TAC, and Papscreen advertisements show very good evidence that graphic campaigns work to change people's behaviour. Media campaigns are effective when they use confronting messages as they force people to pay attention.

This campaign is emotive. It is designed to make people stop and think about the impact that their lifestyle will have on their future. The complications of diabetes are very real and can affect people in many ways, but type 2 diabetes can be prevented.<sup>6</sup>

Television commercials which use a fear-arousing message are more likely to be effective if there is a call-to-action that can easily be performed, such as calling a help line. The call-to-action in this campaign is calling 13 RISK (13 7475).

### **Is this a 'scare' campaign?**

No this campaign is a reality campaign. Complications of diabetes include heart attack, stroke, kidney damage, amputation and blindness. We are focussing on one of the complications to make people aware of the danger of developing type 2 diabetes.

### **Is the person in the advertisement an actor?**

Yes. The advertisement was produced by Campaign Palace in Victoria. The person in the advertisement is an amputee due to type 1 diabetes, however, she is an actress.

## **Are the complications the same for type 1 diabetes?**

Yes, complications are the same for type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

## **What do we say to people with type 1 diabetes?**

People with type 1 diabetes are often distressed by the graphic nature of this type of advertisement because for them there is no choice about having diabetes. Reminders of diabetes complications in the mass media can be upsetting when they are not anticipated. We can remind people with type 1 diabetes that the campaign is not aimed at them, apologise for any distress and explain that it is important to get these messages out to people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes as they can do something to reduce their risk.

## **What is pre-diabetes?**

Impaired fasting glucose (IFG) and impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) are both conditions where blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough for a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. The term 'pre-diabetes' is often used to describe these conditions. Studies have shown that people with pre-diabetes have an increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease.<sup>7</sup>

## **What is type 2 diabetes?**

- It occurs when either the insulin is not working effectively (insulin resistance) or the pancreas does not produce sufficient insulin (or a combination of both).
- It represents 85–90 percent of all cases of diabetes.<sup>8</sup>
- It usually develops in adults over the age of 45 years but it is increasingly occurring at a younger age.
- It is more likely to develop in people with a family history or from particular ethnic backgrounds.
- Symptoms may be similar to those for type 1 diabetes. Other symptoms of type 2 diabetes include; frequent infections (thrush, urinary tract or skin infections) and slow wound healing. Many people with type 2 diabetes do not have any symptoms or they may be very mild.
- For some people the first indication of diabetes coincides with a complication of diabetes such as a heart attack, foot ulcer or stroke.
- In early stages type 2 diabetes can usually be managed with a healthy lifestyle and regular medical checks, but eventually medications and/or insulin may be required. It is estimated that after 7–10 years of having diabetes, 60 per cent of people will require insulin.<sup>9</sup>

## **Who is at risk of developing type 2 diabetes?<sup>10</sup>**

- people who are inactive
- people who have a family history of type 2 diabetes
- people who are overweight or obese
- people with pre-diabetes
- people with high blood pressure and/or abnormal fats or a history of cardiovascular disease
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- people from certain ethnic backgrounds
- women who have had diabetes during pregnancy (gestational diabetes)
- women with polycystic ovarian syndrome and are overweight
- smokers
- people taking antipsychotic medication

## Can type 2 diabetes be prevented?

A person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes can be reduced by maintaining a healthy weight, being physically active and following a healthy eating plan.

## Can people prevent type 1 diabetes?

Type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented.

## What is the Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool (AUDRISK)?

The AUDRISK was developed in 2008 as part of an Australian Government health initiative aimed at preventing type 2 diabetes, raising awareness of and detecting undiagnosed type 2 diabetes.

## What does the AUDRISK do?

The tool assesses a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes within the next five years, based on a score for risk factors such as age, gender, country of birth, family history of diabetes, history of high blood pressure, smoking status, fruit and vegetable intake, physical activity levels and waist circumference. Those with a score of 15 or more are encouraged to speak to their GP and to consider participating in a lifestyle modification program, such as the Life! program.<sup>11</sup>

Refer to the Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment test at [www.diabeteslife.org.au](http://www.diabeteslife.org.au).

## How do people get on a Life! course?

All you need to do is assess your risk of type 2 diabetes by filling in the free, easy to use, AUDRISK which you can complete it on the website [www.diabeteslife.org.au](http://www.diabeteslife.org.au).

If you score 15 or more, you should make an appointment to see your doctor and discuss your suitability to enroll in a type 2 diabetes prevention course such as Life!. Take your completed risk test with you to your doctors appointment.

If you have any questions or need help filling in the risk test call the Life! office on (03) 8648 1880.

- 
1. Dunstan, D., et al., Diabetes and associated disorders in Australia 2000. The Accelerating Epidemic, Australian diabetes, obesity and lifestyle report. 2001, International Diabetes Institute: Melbourne.
  2. Carter, O., Donovan, R & Jalleh, G. , Diabetes Awareness Advertisement Testing for 45 To 70 year old May 2003. , Western Australians CBRCC Report
  3. Donovan, R., Carter, O & Jalleh, G. , Pre- and Post- testing of Multiple Media versus Television only Diabetes Advertising Campaign in Geraldton and Bunbury CBRCC Report. 2003,
  4. VAED amputation data (amputations caused by complications from type 2 diabetes)
  5. [http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/173\\_07\\_021000/campbell/campbell.htm](http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/173_07_021000/campbell/campbell.htm)
  6. Tan N, Hassard K. Quitline calls and campaign television investment. In: Hassard K, editor. Australia's National Tobacco Campaign Evaluation Report Volume Two. Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care; 2000. p.133–8.
  7. Coutinho, M., Gerstein, HC, Wang, Y, Yusuf, S. , *The relationship between glucose and incident cardiovascular events. A metaregression analysis of published data from 20 studies of 95,783 individuals followed for 12.4 years.* Diabetes Care, 1999. 22: p. 233–240.
  8. AIHW, Diabetes: Australian facts 2008, 2008.
  9. Group, U.R., *Intensive blood-glucose control with sulphonylureas or insulin compared with conventional treatment and risk of complications in patients with type 2 diabetes* Lancet 1998. 352(UKPDS 33): p. 854–65.
  10. IONE, *Evidence Based Guideline for Case Detection and Diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes.* Public Consultation Draft. 2008, The Institute of Obesity, Nutrition and Exercise, The University of Sydney, The Diabetes Unit, Australian Health Policy Institute, The University of Sydney, for the Diabetes Australia Guideline Development Consortium.
  11. AUDRISK, *The Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool.*