

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 8 August 2014

Pioneering study will assess the impact of diabetes-related distress, anxiety and depression in young Australians with diabetes.

A new **Diabetes MILES Youth Study** will be the largest ever to focus on the psychological wellbeing of young Australians living with diabetes. Young people aged 10–19 years with type 1 and type 2 diabetes will be invited to take part in the national, online survey which will focus on how they feel about their diabetes, their quality of life and wellbeing. Diabetes Australia says there are currently at least 11,200 young people with diabetes in this age group.

The study will also invite parents of a child living with diabetes to complete a similar survey about how their lives and wellbeing are affected by caring for a child with diabetes.

The new study is funded by the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS) – an Australian Government initiative providing self-management products and support to all Australians with diabetes. The findings will inform recommendations for reducing the mental health burden of diabetes on children and families and supporting self-management.

Launching the survey, Professor Greg Johnson, CEO of Diabetes Australia said, “This is a landmark opportunity for young people with diabetes to have their say on how they are directly affected by living with diabetes. The Diabetes MILES Youth Study will build on the success of the 2011 Diabetes MILES Study in adults which brought to light serious levels of diabetes-related distress, anxiety and depression in the everyday lives of adult Australians living with diabetes. The results will provide valuable information to assist the NDSS in putting resources in place to meet the needs of these young Australians.”

National Program Leader, Renza Scibilia, added, “We know that around 30-40% of young people with type 1 diabetes do not successfully move from the children’s to the adult healthcare system, in fact a substantial number become disengaged from the health system which can lead to ongoing difficulties with diabetes self-management. Furthermore, we know very little about the psychological wellbeing and support needs of young people with type 2 diabetes in this 10–19 age group.

“Close to one third of adolescents living with diabetes need additional mental health support so it’s important that this study gives young people a voice where they can share their personal experiences and we can learn from how they and their families live with diabetes” said Ms Scibilia.

The Diabetes MILES Youth survey will be live online (<http://www.milesyouth.com/>) for four weeks from Monday 11 August 2014, covering a range of issues relevant to young people with diabetes and their parents.

The survey is being conducted by researchers at the Australian Centre for Behavioural Research in Diabetes.

Available for interview:

Diabetes Australia Chief Executive **Professor Greg Johnson**

The Australian Centre for Behavioural Research in Diabetes **Dr Christel Hendrieckx**

Young People with Diabetes National Development Program Leader **Renza Scibilia**

Note to editors:

Diabetes MILES (Management and Impact for Long-term Empowerment and Success) Youth is a national survey of young Australians (aged between 10 and 19 years) and their parents, living with type 1 or type 2 diabetes. The survey will be conducted online in August – September 2014. Further information can be found at http://www.diabetesmiles.org.au/images/FAQ/mys_faq_final.pdf

More information on diabetes can be found at <http://www.ndss.com.au/> or <http://diabetesaustralia.com.au/>

The Australian Centre for Behavioural Research in Diabetes is a partnership for better health between Diabetes Australia – Vic and Deakin University.

The National Diabetes Services Scheme is an initiative of the Australian Government administered by Diabetes Australia.

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