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Media Statement

**TRAUMATIC LOSSES LEAD TO GENEROUS DIABETES BEQUEST**

Just ahead of National Diabetes Week 2016 (July 10-16) WA's peak diabetes research funding group, Diabetes Research WA, has revealed the hope behind the tragedy and heartache that sparked one of their latest bequests.

Having lost both her husband Joe and son Ross to type 1 diabetes, when Perth woman Nancy Warner passed away in 2014 at the age of 97, it was her wish that some of her estate be left to diabetes research.

"Joe and Ross died some decades apart but each had been massively impacted by their diabetes – Joe had a leg amputated and Ross had lost his sight by the time he passed away at 63," explained friend Lynne Milne, also the executor of Nancy's will.

"Nancy believes they both were tired of managing their condition and chose to stop using insulin.

"She was really just the loveliest lady and felt strongly that people with diabetes needed more mental health support and I think this was her way of trying to make a difference."

Diabetes Research WA executive director Sherl Westlund said she was incredibly grateful for Nancy's generosity.

"As an organisation, we're committed, through funding world-leading research, to easing the trauma of living with diabetes and that includes the psychological challenges, which can be significant," said Ms Westlund.

Diabetes Research WA has recently funded West Australian research by Telethon Kids Institute PhD student Matthew Cooper which has revealed children diagnosed with type 1 diabetes were twice as likely to develop mental health conditions such as anxiety, eating and personality and behaviour disorders during early adulthood than their peers, and that these conditions occurred at a higher rate among patients with a history of poor blood sugar level control.

"Diabetes can be an incredibly stressful condition to live with and it's not just the person with it that's affected, it can also be a constant worry for family members who are helping care for their loved one," Ms Westlund explained.

"We've already contributed significantly to understanding the psychological impact of diabetes but we want to take that to another level so people like Nancy don't lose their loved ones in such tragic circumstances."

For more details on the work of Diabetes Research WA head to [www.diabetesresearchwa.com.au](http://www.diabetesresearchwa.com.au) or call (08) 9224 1006.

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