

October, 2016

Media Statement

## **DIABETES RESEARCH GROUP URGES STRESSING LESS WITH NEW TOOL**

WA's peak diabetes research funding group is urging people with all forms of diabetes to place a focus on reducing their stress levels, including considering art therapy to help better manage their condition.

Ahead of World Diabetes Day 2016 (November 14), Diabetes Research WA has released two colouring pages as a simple way for those with diabetes – and those without – to take time out and boost relaxation and mindfulness.

“Emotional distress is believed to impact as many as four in every 10 people with type 1 and type 2 diabetes and stress hormones can wreak havoc with blood glucose levels<sup>1</sup>,” said Ms Westlund.

“On top of this, it can sometimes spark behaviours that can affect blood glucose levels – things such as drinking more alcohol, not eating as well and exercising less but mindful art therapy<sup>23</sup> has been shown to be able to help people with diabetes manage stress, anxiety and depression.

“For those that aren't as keen on artistic time out, we'd be urging them to look around and find any activity that helps them relax – it could be walking in nature, swimming, meditating, playing with their pets, it doesn't matter really, as long as the end result is that they feel better able to cope with life.”

Ms Westlund said when blood glucose levels weren't properly controlled the health effects could be significant.

“High blood sugar levels can lead to issues such as damage to blood vessels, which increase a person's risk of heart attack and stroke, and it can also lead to problems with the eyes, kidneys, feet, sexual organs, teeth and gums, and nerves so it's incredibly important people are helped to avoid these complications,” she said.

The colouring pages are available for download on Diabetes Research WA's website – [www.diabetesresearchwa.com.au](http://www.diabetesresearchwa.com.au) – and Ms Westlund urged community groups to contact the organisation if they wanted copies sent out.

They will also be available at the group's World Diabetes Day event in Wembley.

“Diabetes Research WA: Making Extraordinary Discoveries in Diabetes Research” is on Friday November 11 at 10am.

To RSVP please email [admin@diabetesresearchwa.com.au](mailto:admin@diabetesresearchwa.com.au) or call (08) 9224 1006 by November 3.

-ends-

**MEDIA CONTACT: Natalie Caudle [natalie@capturemedia.com.au](mailto:natalie@capturemedia.com.au), 0407 984 435**

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.psyneuen-journal.com/article/S0306-4530\(16\)30134-2/pdf](http://www.psyneuen-journal.com/article/S0306-4530(16)30134-2/pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2804629/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23612534>