

December 6, 2013

Media Statement

## **APPEAL TO AID DIABETES RESEARCH THIS CHRISTMAS**

A WA group dedicated to solely funding West Australian research into diabetes is aiming to raise more than \$150,000 this Christmas to channel into life-changing studies.

The Diabetes Research Foundation of WA (DRFWA), which helps local scientists investigate new ways to help tackle type 1 and type 2 diabetes, said \$150,000 would help ensure its annual grants could be handed out in 2014.

It has just announced the awarding of its 2013 grants with \$75,000 being directed to a project aimed at creating a test that could indicate a person's chances of developing type 1 diabetes, as well as predict the risk of those with the condition developing diabetic complications.

A further \$75,000 will fund a bid by local researchers to unravel the mysteries of a protein believed to help the body limit diet-induced obesity and type 2 diabetes.

DRFWA executive director Sherl Westlund said the Foundation was thrilled to be part of such innovative research.

"It's phenomenal that research of this nature is being done in WA because these projects have the potential to help make such crucial inroads in stemming the impact of type 1 and type 2 diabetes globally," she said.

"We're urging everyone thinking about their health and that of their family members this Christmas to realise that making even modest donations or bequests to medical research can help so many people."

Ms Westlund cited two already-finished projects funded by DRFWA as examples.

"One study we made possible has just found that women who develop type 1 diabetes as a child have a significantly higher mortality rate during early adulthood than other women of their age which is deeply concerning and more research urgently needs to be done to understand exactly what can be done about this," she said.

"Another project we funded has discovered that type 2 diabetes can dramatically affect the everyday thinking skills of up to 1 in 3 of those aged over 60 – again, very important findings that we can use to help those affected by the condition."

The DRFWA, based at Royal Perth Hospital, is the State's longest running diabetes research funding group, having been established in 1976 to stimulate research into diabetes in Western Australia, has now raised and distributed more than \$4.6 million dollars for this work. For information, please visit [www.diabetesresearchfoundation.asn.au](http://www.diabetesresearchfoundation.asn.au) or call (08) 9224 1006.

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