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Media Statement

TV STAR STOPS IN NEDLANDS FOR DIABETES RESEARCH UPDATE

In Perth for a preview screening of the new season of *A Place to Call Home*, Australian TV actress Jenni Baird took time out to meet with WA's top diabetes researchers .

The visit comes hot on the heels of her announcement as a Royal Perth Hospital-based charity Diabetes Research WA's first celebrity ambassador.

Baird – a WA Academy of Performing Arts graduate who plays villainous character Regina Standish in FOXTEL's *A Place to Call Home* – took a tour through the Nedlands laboratory of WA's Centre for Diabetes Research, headed up by City Beach Professor Grant Morahan.

Professor Morahan shared his group's latest news including how his team hoped to progress to human clinical trials their discovery of how to produce pancreatic insulin-secreting beta cells from precursor cells in mice, a breakthrough they had demonstrated could also work in humans and which they hoped could provide new, more permanent treatments or a cure for type 1 diabetes.

He also discussed their Diabetes Research WA-funded project focused on a genetic test to predict which people with type 2 diabetes would go on to develop heart disease, a leading cause of death of those with the condition, giving doctors and patients early warning and hope of being able to help ward off the complication.

Baird's cousin's son has type 1 diabetes.

Diabetes Research WA celebrates its 40 year anniversary in 2016.

Over the past four decades, it has helped fund globally-significant locally-based research projects into all forms of diabetes, having distributed more than \$4.7 million dollars for this work.

For information, please visit www.diabetesresearchwa.com.au or call (08) 9224 1006.

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