

23 March 2023

Diabetes Victoria seeks a brighter future for diabetes as organisation celebrates a significant milestone

On the eve of Diabetes Victoria's 70-year anniversary, new data shows that diabetes prevalence rates are continuing to grow at a concerning rate. In the last 15 years, the number of Victorians living with diabetes has almost doubled and is expected to break through the critical 400,000 mark this year.

Diabetes Victoria's CEO recognises now is the time to create a brighter future for people living with, or at risk of diabetes as the growth of the condition across the country is not slowing.

"We know almost 32,000 Victorians were diagnosed with diabetes in the last year alone, so we expect to bypass the 400,000 mark later this year.

"This is a such a significant number of people who are living every day, 24 hours a day with this complex condition and we know the only answer to ensure a brighter future for people is by working together across the committed diabetes community," says Diabetes Victoria CEO, Glen Noonan.

The Victorian diabetes community counted 62,500 people in 1990. This rate has grown significantly since then – to 200,000 Victorians in 2007 and 383,000 Victorians in 2022.

Mr Noonan said, "On top of this, there are many people out there in the community who have developed diabetes but do not know it yet – so called 'silent diabetes'. The estimated prevalence figure of diabetes in the Victorian community is much higher as it can take several years for a person with type 2 diabetes to receive a diagnosis – a long time in which the untreated condition can create significant and often irreversible damage in the body.

"As we celebrate 70 years of our organisation working with the diabetes community, we are sure those people who started Diabetes Victoria in 1953 would have hoped we were no longer needed in 2023.

"However, the unfortunate truth is we are needed more than ever. We believe everyone in the Victorian diabetes community deserves to have a future where less people are diagnosed with diabetes, where the condition is less of a burden on people living with diabetes, where diabetes causes less complications and where we do achieve a cure.

"We are looking to be ambitious and bold to pursue this bright future. A future with goals and plans to improve the management of diabetes, to provide effective and early interventions to reduce avoidable complications and that help people live long and healthy lives, and importantly a future where people can live more confident lives without stigma and discrimination.

"We want to see a world where breakthroughs in new treatments and care are made available to all people, regardless of their socio-economic status.



“I am convinced that to achieve this requires a massive step change in many aspects – including how diabetes is understood, how it is funded by government and industry and how diabetes care is provided within the health system.

“With all the challenges and the complexity of living in our community and the growing prevalence of diabetes it will take the entire diabetes community and all the skills and capabilities to come together - no one group alone can solve this,” he said.

**We support, empower and campaign for all Victorians living with,
or affected, by diabetes.**

Media enquiries:

Annette Ripper | aripper@diabetesvic.org.au | 0400 772 722

Sybille Taylor | staylor@diabetesvic.org.au | 0408 102 344

Diabetes Victoria

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country

comms@diabetesvic.org.au

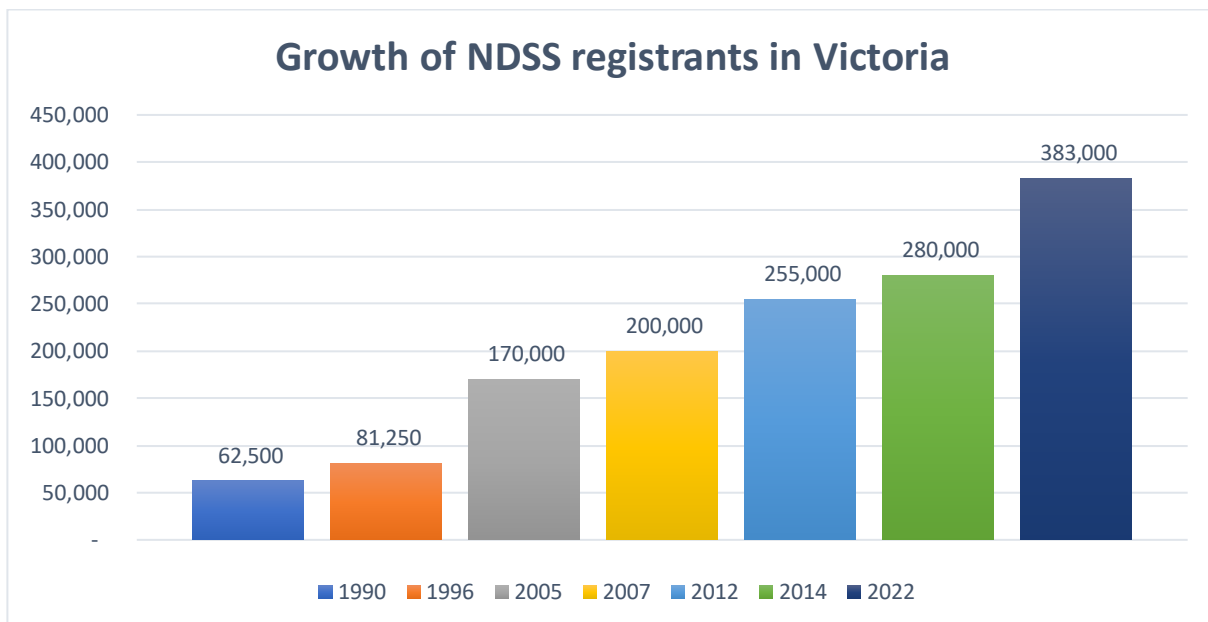


About diabetes in Victoria

Diabetes Victoria is presenting this data snapshot in the week of their 70-year anniversary. On Tuesday 24 March in 1953, the first meeting of the Victorian Diabetics Association (VDA) was held at Melbourne Town Hall – this was the first members meeting of what we now call Diabetes Victoria.

The prevalence of type 2 diabetes is rising at an alarming rate. Every year, more than 17,000 Victorians develop type 2 diabetes. In addition, there are another 13,000 Victorian women with gestational diabetes who are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes after their pregnancy.

Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed in some cases. Since 2007, Diabetes Victoria has been funded by the Victorian Government to deliver the *Life!* Program, a free healthy lifestyle program to reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.



- Every day, 90 Victorians develop diabetes – making it the fastest growing chronic condition in our state.
- All types of diabetes are serious and can cause further health complications.
- Heart attacks and strokes are up to four times more likely in people with diabetes.
- Diabetes is the leading cause of preventable blindness in adults.
- Kidney failure is three times more common in people with diabetes.
- Amputations are 15 times more common in people with diabetes.
- Depression, anxiety and distress affect more than 30 per cent of all people with diabetes.

