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Government urged to address the other pandemic: diabetes

Diabetes Victoria today released its election priorities for the next Victorian Government and called for urgent action to address the silent diabetes pandemic.

CEO of Diabetes Victoria, Glen Noonan said, “We are calling on the next Victorian Government to make an election commitment now to prioritise support for Victorians living with diabetes, an extremely serious and complex condition that requires daily self-care.

“That means, we need both major parties to take diabetes seriously. They need to appreciate that over 1 million Victorians – 1 in 5 voters – are affected by diabetes in some way, either by having some type of diabetes themselves, or having a family member with diabetes.

“The Victorian Government knows that 1 in 4 people in Victoria’s hospitals has diabetes. It has identified the need to reduce hospital admissions among people with diabetes. But it currently has *no clear plan* on how to achieve this.

“We need a plan – an ambitious Victorian Diabetes Plan – focused on the urgent need to improve both the health and quality of life of all Victorians affected by, or at risk of, diabetes, and to reduce hospital admissions,” he said.

Currently there is no cure for any type of diabetes and all types of diabetes have long-term health implications, which can reduce both quality and length of life.

Mr Noonan said, “In the past two years, 1 in 5 COVID-19 deaths have been among people with pre-existing diabetes. People with diabetes have been far more likely than the general population to be hospitalised, and experience very serious complications.

One of the big issues for many people living with diabetes is the stigma associated with the condition, which results in blame and discrimination. Another issue is the relentlessness of managing this condition every day. Currently, one in three people living with diabetes experience depression, anxiety, or diabetes distress.

Mr Noonan said, “Diabetes is increasing at a faster rate than any other chronic condition and remains one of the biggest challenges confronting our health system.

“Unlike many other similarly serious conditions, diabetes has an image problem, so this condition doesn’t receive the funding or attention it deserves.

“These are testing times for everyone, but particularly for the 374,000 Victorians who are currently living with diabetes,” he said.

Diabetes Victoria

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At this state election, Diabetes Victoria is asking the incoming government to commit to five key areas:

- Innovation in Diabetes Care; commit to developing a Victorian Diabetes Plan.
- Diabetes and Mental Health; to support Victorians living with this 24/7 condition.
- Diabetes in Hospitals; to improve the safety of people with diabetes in Victoria's hospitals.
- Equity: to ensure all Victorian children with diabetes have equitable access to education and related opportunities, and to reduce stigma and discrimination in Victoria's workplaces.
- Prevention and remission of type 2 diabetes; to increase the support for Victorians at risk of type 2 diabetes.

For detailed information and to download the Election priorities 2022, *'Diabetes. Testing Times'*, visit: www.diabetesvic.org.au

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