



The Youth Type 2 Diabetes Advocate

Sharing news, events, and research about youth type 2 diabetes

This newsletter has been developed by our youth team who are working with young people, families, community and health professionals to improve models of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with type 2 diabetes across northern Australia. It will share important findings and updates, including co-designed strategies we are implementing, what resources are being developed and key events we want to promote. This work sits within the *Diabetes Across the Lifecourse: Northern Australia Partnership*. For more information go to our website: <https://diabeteslifecourse.org.au>



We are working across four main regions: in the NT - the Top End and Central Australia, along with the Kimberley and Far North Queensland.

In the first four editions of our newsletter, we will introduce each regional team. Meet our team in Central Australia, (left to right): Emma Weaver is our Evaluator, Shiree Mack is our Community Liaison Officer, & Kim Martin is our Project Coordinator.

Our formative findings from in-depth interviews in the NT

What are young people with type 2 diabetes telling us?

"I thought [...] just old people [got it]... I didn't know younger people get it as well."

"I was full-on crying. I just wanted to get out of there [...] I didn't want to believe it. It was horrible. Horrible [...] horrible when I found out."

Resources we are developing in response to these findings:

- **Video narratives:** To reduce the negative perceptions of a diabetes diagnosis and shift norms and expectations about living with this condition, participants want to learn from other young people about their experiences of managing type 2 diabetes.

We are developing a library of video narratives with young people telling their story about living with type 2 diabetes. These videos are for health professionals to use when talking to young people in clinic and are available on our Diabetes across the Lifecourse Partnership website at:

<https://diabeteslifecourse.org.au/youth-diabetes/youth-diabetes-youth-resources/>

- **Educational resources for Health Professionals:** We know that some young people have a suboptimal understanding of type 2 diabetes. Health Professionals have asked for tailored resources, to assist with diabetes education for young people. *We are developing short videos with clinicians and young people as a resource for health professionals to use when explaining diabetes and diabetes management to young people.*

[Health Professionals have] "explained it to me heaps of times; I still can't get it right."

Our project in the news

- **'Caring for Indigenous youth with type 2 diabetes'** – Project Lead Dr Renae Kirkham spoke to Teagan Taylor on ABC Radio National RN Health Report about working with young people, community and health professionals to address critical gaps in youth type 2 diabetes management" Available here: <https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/healthreport/type-2-diabetes-indigenous-youth/101490992>
- **'Diabetes epidemic hits Central Australia'** – Project Officer Shiree Mack and Dr Matt Hare described our new research to NITV reporters highlighting that type 2 diabetes has reached epidemic proportions in remote Aboriginal communities. Available here: <https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2022/06/16/diabetes-epidemic-hits-central-australia>
- **'I don't really know what diabetes is'** – The youth type 2 diabetes team recently featured in Menzies Healthy Tomorrow report. Available here: ["I don't really know what diabetes is": Study finds more support is needed](#)

Our Top End team recently held a 2-day Co-design Workshop

Participants created artwork to represent what a good life means to them, how diabetes impacts their lives and what a good life with diabetes would look like. The rich discussion that followed will inform the group's future work to address the impact of type 2 diabetes on young people's quality of life. *Key findings from this workshop were that the young people involved really enjoyed the opportunity to network together with peers, share their stories and connect with each other.*



Recent publications

1. In 2021 we published key results with *the Lancet* indicating that northern Australia has the highest prevalence of type 2 diabetes in any population of youth internationally in 25 years. This paper entitled "Youth-onset type 2 diabetes among First Nations young people in northern Australia: a retrospective, cross-sectional study" is available at: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/landia/article/PIIS2213-8587\(21\)00286-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/landia/article/PIIS2213-8587(21)00286-2/fulltext)
2. We recently published our formative work highlighting the lived experiences of young people with type 2 diabetes with the *Canadian Journal of Diabetes*, entitled "I don't really know what diabetes is": A qualitative study exploring the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged 10-25 years living with type 2 diabetes in northern and central Australia, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcjd.2022.04.010>

Our health professional webinar series

This series was developed in response to findings from our health professional survey that showed health professionals in the NT would like to improve their knowledge and confidence when working with young people with type 2 diabetes. This series is led by our in-house Paediatric Endocrinologist Dr Angela Titmuss and FNQ Regional Coordinator Damian Kukulies. You can register at any time and listen to these webinars at your convenience at: <https://www.stickytickets.com.au/2F8PB>

What's coming up in our webinar?

Mental Health for Young People	27 th October
Assessing Readiness and Motivation for Change	10 th November
Models of Care and Thinking Beyond the Health Sector	24 th November

Thanks for reading! If you have any questions or would like to be more involved in our project, please contact our relevant staff in your region:

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