

## Media Release

22 December 2025

# GPs join SWSPHN in fight against growing problem of diabetes in South Western Sydney

Statistics show the rate of type 2 diabetes diagnoses within South Western Sydney has doubled in the past 20 years, putting it well above the NSW average.

While the statistics are alarming, South Western Sydney PHN (SWSPHN) is playing its part to help GPs halt the escalating rate of type 2 diabetes in the region.

Over the last three years, SWSPHN and South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) have jointly supported 53 practices to hold 157 type 2 diabetes clinics at their practices, with in-person attendance by an endocrinologist and diabetes educator.

The aim of these clinics is to upskill GPs in complex diabetes management, lessening the need for referrals to hospital outpatient clinics. The partnership also delivers rapid access to endocrinology advice through telehealth case conferencing.

SWSPHN and SWSLHD have been partnering, along with general practices in South Western Sydney, to provide access to free diabetes education sessions, held within the practice or at a local community health centre.

SWSPHN has also partnered with exercise physiologists across South Western Sydney to establish small group exercise classes for patients diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. Many of these classes are bulk billed.

SWSPHN Acting CEO Amy Prince said the region's GPs played a vital role in managing diabetes in the community by supporting their patients and offering guidance, along with help to manage their symptoms.

"Our GPs understand the importance of getting on the front foot when it comes to treating diabetes and many of them are working hard to educate their patients about the need to make the right choices," she said.

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**These services are supported by funding from the Australian Government through the PHN program.**

South Western Sydney PHN is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting general practitioners, practice nurses and other primary health providers to deliver the best possible care for their patients. Our aim is to improve access to quality local healthcare for all residents living in the Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Camden, Wollondilly and Wingecarribee LGAs. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, water and skies of South Western Sydney, the Darug, Dharawal and Gundungurra peoples, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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To understand the full impact of the problem it helps to go back to the statistics.

In census data from 2021, there were 61,086 people in South Western Sydney with diabetes (not including gestational diabetes) which translates to a standardised rate of 6.4 per 100 people. This is higher than the self-reported NSW rate of 4.8 people per 100. And that number is expected to increase to 127,481 people by 2036.

Diabetes Australia estimates the National Diabetes Service Scheme (NDSS) covers 80 to 90 per cent of people with diagnosed diabetes. Their figures show almost 1.5 million Australians were living with diabetes (mostly type 2) in March 2024.

In South Western Sydney (SWS) registration data is higher than self-reported but is still likely to underestimate the true number as it only includes people who have been diagnosed and who have registered with the scheme.

In 2021, there were 72,190 people registered – or 6.6 per cent of SWS population, which is higher than the NSW average of 5.1 per cent. Of these, 88.2 per cent have type 2 diabetes, 7.3 per cent have type 1 diabetes and 3.7 per cent have gestational diabetes.

Across local government areas in SWS, Fairfield has the highest proportion of NDSS registrants (8.1 per cent), and postcodes 2164 and 2176 within the Fairfield LGA have even higher proportions at 9 per cent and 8.3 per cent respectively.

Campbelltown has the second highest proportion (7.5 per cent) and contains the postcodes 2564 and 2565 where the registered population proportion is 9 per cent and 8 per cent respectively.

While Liverpool rates the third highest proportion of registrants (6.9 per cent) it contains two of the highest rated postcodes with 2179 registering 14.3 per cent, which is more than double that of SWS, NSW and Australia, and postcode 2555 recording 11 per cent, which is also very high.

The increase in diabetes rates in SWS is thought to be linked to population growth in groups at higher risk of type 2, as well as growth in lower income areas. Socio-economic status is linked to diabetes, with lower incomes areas consistently shown to have a higher proportion of individuals with diabetes and an increased risk level.

In 2020-21 both diabetes-related hospitalisations and diabetes related potentially preventable hospitalisations were higher in SWS than the rest of NSW.

In SWS in 2020-21, the age-standardised rate of potentially preventable hospitalisation for diabetes complications was 171 per 100,000 people, higher than the NSW rate of 162 per 100,000.

Within SWS, Campbelltown has the highest rate (242 per 100,000 people) of preventable hospitalisations.

Our community can learn more about diabetes on SWSPHN's [Health Resource Directory](#) website.

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