Media Release:  Friday, 12 November

Australia’s largest diabetes clinic opens on eve of World Diabetes Day

A new purpose-built facility for Australia’s largest specialist diabetes clinic will be officially opened in Melbourne on Friday, 12 November on the eve of World Diabetes Day (Sunday, 14 November).

The Victor Smorgon Diabetes Centre – which treats more than 8000 patients - will be opened, along with the country’s first Healthy Lifestyle Research Centre, by the Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing.

With type 2 diabetes set to become the leading cause of disease burden in Australia by 2023, this one-stop shop for people with, or at risk of, diabetes will be a critical resource in the fight against Australia’s diabetes epidemic.

Combining state-of-the-art facilities and a comprehensive approach to education and treatment, this pioneering clinic will serve as a model for other facilities around the world.

In a bid to stem the dramatic rise of diabetes and its’ most serious complication, heart disease, Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute has also developed the Healthy Lifestyle Research Centre, which will provide pioneering evidenced-based research to support the specialist diabetes clinic.

There is substantial evidence that physical activity contributes to the primary and secondary prevention of several chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, and is associated with a reduced risk of premature death.

Improving physical activity, particularly in older adults who are inactive, may have significant health benefits, and programs developed at Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute – such as the Lift for Life strength training program - have successfully demonstrated their value as both a preventative measure and as an alternative to common drug therapies.

It is hoped that the unique combination of the Healthy Lifestyle Research Centre and the specialist diabetes clinic will deliver sustainable lifestyle changes to individuals as well as world-class treatment, and help to shape Australia’s health policy in the future.

“The lethal combination of obesity and diabetes threaten to be one of the biggest epidemics Australia has every faced. It is imperative that we focus our energy on providing highly-specialised care for the millions of Australians affected by diabetes, as well as preventative measures for people at-risk of this serious chronic disease and its’ complications,” Baker IDI Director Emeritus and Director of International Research, Professor Paul Zimmet said.

For media enquiries, please contact
Christina Hickie: 03 8532 1129 / 0417 130 420 - christina.hickie@bakeridi.edu.au
Tracey Ellis: 03 8532 1514/ 0433 781 972 – tracey.ellis@bakeridi.edu.au

Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute
75 Commercial Road, Melbourne VIC 3004 Australia
T +61 3 8532 1111  F +61 3 8532 1100  E melbourne@bakeridi.edu.au  W www.bakeridi.edu.au
PO Box 6492, St Kilda Road Central, Melbourne VIC 8008 Australia
“The unique combination of expert skills and research capabilities within our specialist diabetes clinic and Healthy Lifestyle Research Centre represents a new era in health care and is a timely and powerful resource in the face of our greatest health care challenge.”

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