

Type 2 diabetes research to improve health services and support

Perth researchers want to interview people with type 2 diabetes to understand how the condition affects their lives.

The researchers, from Curtin University of Technology, are looking for ways to improve the health services and support people with type 2 diabetes receive.

“We want to understand how living with type 2 diabetes affects people’s personal lives, their families, their work and their finances,” researcher Beatriz Cuesta Briand said.

“Through talking to people with type 2 diabetes about their experience, we can hopefully find better ways to support them, including making suggestions as to how health services can be more responsive to their needs.”

An estimated 840,000 Australians have type 2 diabetes, or 7% of the adult population.

According to ‘Diabetes: Australian Facts 2008’, published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the proportion of people with diabetes more than doubled between 1989 and 2005. The rise is largely driven by an increase in the prevalence of type 2 diabetes.

The report found that some groups, such as the least well-off and Indigenous Australians, were more likely to develop diabetes, and had significantly higher diabetes hospitalisation and death rates than the general population.

Beatriz’s study is examining the link between disadvantage and type 2 diabetes.

Research interviews will focus on four northern Perth suburbs - Balga, Mirrabooka, Nollamara and Westminster. Focus groups have already been conducted in Mirrabooka in the first phase of the study.

“People who are less well off are at higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes,” Beatriz said.

“Once they have developed diabetes, they are less likely to access health services to help manage their condition”.

“If we can understand why through our interviews, we may then be able to help prevent people developing serious complications from type 2 diabetes and improve the support those with the condition receive, particularly those who are more disadvantaged.”

To take part in the research, participants must have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes for at least a year, live in Balga, Mirrabooka, Nollamara or Westminster, and be at least 18 years old.

People who take part in the interviews will receive \$30 to compensate them for their time and contribution.

The interviews take about an hour and can be completed in the participant’s home or another location of their choosing.

The study has been undertaken in collaboration with Diabetes WA, and with the support of Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service and community-based support groups.

To find out more about the study or to organise an interview, contact Beatriz Cuesta Briand on 9266 3170 or beatriz.cuestabriand@postgrad.curtin.edu.au.