

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

World Diabetes Day, November 14 2008

This year the 14th of November marked the second annual UN World Diabetes Day, the primary global awareness campaign for diabetes. For 2008, the World Diabetes Day theme was diabetes in children and adolescents, with Diabetes Australia leading activities for the campaign in Australia.

Diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases of childhood and can strike at any age, including infants and toddlers. Unfortunately diabetes is on the rise in children with more than 200 children being diagnosed with type 1 diabetes every day. In developing nations the situation is much worse with many children dying soon after their diagnoses, mainly because their families cannot afford or access the medication they need to keep them alive.

Diabetes Australia believes that no child should die because of diabetes and has used this year's World Diabetes Day to raise awareness of the seriousness of diabetes and to promote healthier lifestyles to help prevent the increasing incidence of type 2 diabetes in children.

Diabetes Australia is also participating in a global Monument Challenge, where landmarks around the world will light up the skyline in the blue of the diabetes circle, the global symbol for diabetes.

In 2007 the Monument Challenge saw the Eiffel Tower, Empire State Building, Niagara Falls and the London Eye lit in blue for diabetes awareness, and more locally the Sydney Opera House, Flinders Street Station and Parliament House also brought diabetes to light amongst 297 other iconic monuments. In 2008, an amazing 1085 iconic buildings and monuments around the world brought diabetes to light.

There were also 115 countries that have recorded holding World Diabetes Day events. Pamela Andrews, Carl Zeiss Vision Marketing Communications Manager and Todd Spencer, Carl Zeiss Vision Territory Manager SA/ACT attended the World Diabetes Day black-tie gala event with Bill MacKinley, Lynn MacKinley and Bill Tankey of MacKinley Optical, held in Canberra on the 13th of November.

"This event was a great night and a fantastic opportunity to learn more about the Diabetes epidemic, parliament developments and the achievements of people living with Diabetes. It was great to share this experience with valued customers also, as Optometry can play a very important part in the management of diabetes in maintaining eye health" said Todd Spencer, Carl Zeiss Vision Territory Manager SA/ACT.

Carl Zeiss Vision is a corporate sponsor and partner of Diabetes Australia. Diabetes has strong links to vision, with the importance of regular eye examinations being paramount. Carl Zeiss Vision and Diabetes Australia will continue join forces in 2009 to further educate the community about the importance of people with diabetes getting regular eye health checks, which can assist in the early detection of eye disease.

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Diabetes Facts:

1. Diabetes is a chronic disease with potentially serious complications, **affecting an estimated 1.5 million Australians**; unfortunately about half of these people are unaware of their condition.
2. Retinopathy is the most common diabetes related problem and is also the **most common cause of blindness** in people aged 30-69 years
3. Diabetes Australia recommends that every person diagnosed with diabetes has their **eyes checked immediately and at least every one to two years** after that
4. Diabetes is Australia's fastest growing chronic disease with around **100,000 Australian adults (0.8%) developing Diabetes each year** – that's 275 adults daily. As the sixth leading cause of death in Australia, it is critical that action is taken.
5. Each year Diabetes Australia invests over **\$3.5 million into Diabetes research**.

To find out more information about diabetes go to www.diabetesaustralia.com.au.

Image1: Todd Spencer, Carl Zeiss Vision Territory Manager SA/ACT, Bill MacKinley, Lynn MacKinley, and Bill Tankey of MacKinley Optical

Image2: Sydney Opera House (Please reference: Image supplied by the International Diabetes Foundation)

Image3: Buddha Kamakura (Please reference: Image supplied by the International Diabetes Foundation)

Further Information:

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