

Melbourne to host International Diabetes Congress amid rising health crisis

In a major win for Australia's diabetes community, the International Diabetes Federation Western Pacific Region (IDF WPR) Congress 2026 will be held in Melbourne, led by Australia's leading diabetes organisations.

The Congress is the region's most significant diabetes event and will be held in conjunction with the Australasian Diabetes Congress (ADC). The events will be co-hosted by Diabetes Australia, Australian Diabetes Society and Australian Diabetes Educators Association.

The event is expected to attract more than 2,500 global leaders in diabetes care, research, education and advocacy to the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre over four days from August 18-21. Delegates will include clinicians, researchers, policy experts, educators and people living with diabetes from across the Western Pacific, the IDF's largest and most affected region.

With 215 million adults in the Western Pacific now living with diabetes, which is the fastest-growing chronic condition in Australia, the Congress will serve as a critical platform for accelerating action, shaping policy and forging new collaborations to improve outcomes for people living with or at risk of diabetes.

"This Congress could not come at a more urgent time for Australians living with diabetes," said Diabetes Australia Group CEO Justine Cain.

"Globally, one person is diagnosed with diabetes every 3 seconds. In Australia, more than 300 people are diagnosed every day.

"The impact of this costly condition is being felt across the nation. Hosting this Congress sends a clear message: diabetes is a national and global health emergency, and we are committed to working with the world's best minds to deliver impact and innovation."

"This congress is a chance to hear and learn from world-leading researchers, clinicians and health professionals. It will elevate the voices of people living with diabetes and shape policies that will save lives and reduce the burden of diabetes on our health system," Ms Cain said.

Diabetes costs the Australian health system around \$14.6 billion each year. Experts warn that without coordinated action the economic and social toll will continue to escalate.

Associate Professor Sof Andrikopoulos, CEO of the Australian Diabetes Society, said the Western Pacific region is at the epicentre of the global diabetes crisis.

"This Congress is an opportunity to showcase the latest research and evidence-based innovations in prevention, treatment and management. From cutting-edge therapeutics to integrated models of care, the program will support practical outcomes for health systems and people living with diabetes."

“Australian researchers are already leading the way in diabetes technology and clinical practice. The Congress will foster the critical exchange of knowledge across borders and disciplines.”

Australian Diabetes Educators Association CEO Susan Davidson said credentialled diabetes educators (CDEs) and other health professionals from around the region would gather in Melbourne for the Congress which is an important professional learning opportunity.

“There is an urgent need in Australia and the Western Pacific region for better access to CDE services and hosting this conference in Melbourne will enable health professionals in the region to learn about the latest and most significant developments in diabetes management and care, as well as develop their professional networks and knowledge-share with their regional colleagues.”

“Aligning the IDF Congress with ADC will continue to ensure CDEs and other health professionals have access to the most up to date advice for people living with diabetes,” Ms Davidson said.

The Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) joined in the successful bid for the IDF WPR Congress, with support from the Victorian Government and Tourism Australia’s Business Events Bid Fund Program.

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