



## EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE

# MEDIA RELEASE

**From:** Ms J.M. Freeman MLA  
Chair

**To:** ALL MEDIA

**Date:** 11 April 2019

### **New approaches to type 2 diabetes should be a health priority**

Thousands of West Australians who are suffering with type 2 diabetes could put the disease into remission if they were provided support to change their diet and reduce their waist size, the Education and Health Standing Committee has found.

The report of its inquiry into the role of diet in type 2 diabetes prevention and management, tabled in the Legislative Assembly today, found that failure to consider type 2 diabetes as a health priority will lead to higher future health costs as prevalence grows and complications requiring hospital treatment increase.

Rather than regarding type 2 diabetes as a life-long progressive condition, patients should be offered dietary interventions such as the very low calorie diet and the low carbohydrate diet, which have been shown by UK trials to return high blood glucose levels to the normal range.

People with type 2 or pre-diabetes or with a known susceptibility to the disease need to know that they can take control of their condition with the right advice and assistance.

Poorly controlled type 2 diabetes leads to serious complications, such as cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, limb amputation and blindness. **This costs the State an estimated \$1 billion a year – around 10% of the health budget and 3% of the overall budget.**

With over 100,000 known cases in WA and 28 diagnosed every day, the State cannot afford to be complacent in its approach to management and prevention.

Committee chair Janine Freeman MLA said:

*This report challenges the norms of 'business as usual' and inappropriate guidelines. The existing medical practice of 'screen and prescribe' is no longer suitable from a personal health point of view, as a community health response, and in a health system that competes for scarce resources.*

The report, ***The Food Fix: the role of diet in type 2 diabetes prevention and management***, is available on the Committee's webpage, [www.parliament.wa.gov.au/ehsc](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/ehsc) (under the 'Reports' tab).

Read Janine Freeman's BMJ Opinion piece [here](#) and a BMJ article about UK interest in the inquiry [here](#). A video interview with Ms Freeman and UK low carbohydrate advocate Dr David Unwin is available [here](#).

**For further comment, contact Janine Freeman MLA (Committee Chair) on 0400 012 690.**

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