

Volume 1

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NORTH WEST ADELAIDE HEALTH STUDY

NEWSLETTER

# The North West Adelaide Health Study Takes Off!



Congratulations and thank you for taking part in one of the most comprehensive health assessments in Australia. The North West Adelaide Health Study (NWAHS) is an exciting initiative conducted by the Department of Medicine at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Lyell McEwin Health Service campuses. It is aimed at contributing to the health of the community.

We are delighted that we have received such an enthusiastic response from the community in the study. As a result, it has been a great success so far with

more than 2000 people through the clinics already.

The information obtained from the study will help to identify resources required to improve health status and services in the future. We wish to keep you informed as the study continues. For further information, and a chance to express your opinions, visit our new website at

[www.nwadelaidehealthstudy.org](http://www.nwadelaidehealthstudy.org)

Email: [enquiry@nwadelaidehealthstudy.org](mailto:enquiry@nwadelaidehealthstudy.org)



*Megan conducts an allergy test on an obliging participant*



*Else taking blood from a patient to determine her blood glucose levels*

## The Clinic Staff



*Ingerid Meagher, Ruth Battersby and Sandy Pickering*

Our friendly and enthusiastic clinic staff all have an interest in improving the health of the community.

Ingerid Meagher is the study coordinator. It is her responsibility to ensure that the study is running smoothly. She is available to be contacted on (08) 8222 7866 during business hours to discuss the study and answer any questions that you may have in relation to it.

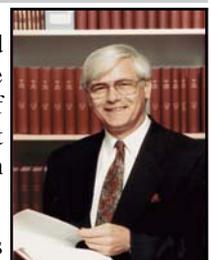
Sandy Pickering is in charge of the Clinic at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Else Jansen is in charge of the Lyell McEwin Health Service.

Other clinic staff include Nadina, Megan, Ruth, Mandy and Janet.

## Behind the Scenes

Professor Richard Ruffin is one of the Chief Investigators of the North West Adelaide Health Study.



*Professor Ruffin*

Professor Ruffin is head of the Department of Medicine at the North Western Adelaide Health Service, which comprises both The Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Lyell McEwin Health Service. He specialises in Respiratory Medicine with a particular focus on asthma.

We value your support on the NWAHS project and would like to keep you informed. If you change your address, phone number or circumstances, please contact Ingerid Meagher on:

Phone: (08) 8222 7866  
Fax: (08) 8222 6042  
Email: [ingerid.meagher@nwahs.sa.gov.au](mailto:ingerid.meagher@nwahs.sa.gov.au)

# Important Information on Diabetes

**Diabetes** is a condition in which the body is unable to control the amount of sugar in the blood. It can result in damage to the blood vessels supplying the heart, brain, limbs, eyes, kidneys and nerves. Diabetes can be successfully controlled. The earlier it is diagnosed, the better the chance of preventing complications.

## Symptoms

For some people the symptoms of type 2 diabetes occur gradually and can often be mistaken as a part of the normal aging process. Approximately 800,000 Australians have diabetes, half of whom don't even know it. The symptoms of diabetes related complications include:

- Blurred vision
- Feeling tired and unwell
- Urinating more frequently
- Feeling thirsty all the time
- Numbness and tingling in the legs or feet
- Recurrent infections or slow healing wounds

The common risk factors for diabetes include:



*'In South Australia, approximately 42,000 people have diabetes'*

- Being over the age of 50 years and
  - Being overweight or,
  - Having a family history of diabetes or,
  - Having high blood pressure
- Being over 65 years old
- Having heart disease
- Having had high blood glucose levels during pregnancy
- Having a borderline blood glucose level
- Being over the age of 35 years and
  - An Aboriginal or a Torres Strait Islander
  - Or a Pacific Islander, from an Indian sub-continent or from a Chinese background

## Asthma

People with asthma have very sensitive airways in their lungs. Their airways narrow when they are exposed to certain triggers, making it hard for a person to breathe. The onset of asthma can occur at any stage in a person's lifetime.

The main symptoms of asthma are:

- Coughing
- Tightness in the chest
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing

The most common triggers of asthma are:

- Colds and flu
- Inhaled triggers such as pollens, moulds, animal hair and dust mites

Other Triggers Include:



- Cigarette smoke (either passive smoking or smoking)
- Temperature and weather changes
- Certain medications
- Certain strong smells and chemicals
- Some foods, preservatives, flavourings and colourings

If you have asthma there are certain daily activities that can help you manage the disease. For example:

- Take your medicine as prescribed
- Monitor your asthma
- Exercising regularly
- Avoid triggers whenever possible
- Have an asthma action plan written down in case of an emergency
- Visit your doctor regularly

## Exercise

Source: National Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians, by Active Australia.

- 1) **Think of movement as an opportunity not an inconvenience.**
- 2) **Be active in as many ways as you can.**
- 3) **Put together at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity on most, and preferably every day of the week.**



- 4) **For extra health and fitness, if you can, enjoy some regular vigorous exercise.**

