

## MEDIA RELEASE

8<sup>th</sup> March 2016

### Rouse Hill residents set to benefit from new Diabetes Education service

A newly launched diabetes education service is set to offer Rouse Hill residents support and advice in the prevention and management of the condition. The landmark health initiative is one of the first health services targeting diabetes in the suburb, and is being offered to the community free of charge.

Led by the Western Sydney Primary Health Network (WSPHN), WentWest in partnership with *The New Rouse Hill*, supports an ongoing campaign to combat the increasing rates of diabetes across western Sydney.

With an expanding population, it's suggested 5% of Rouse Hill's 20,000 residents are diabetic. While this figure is lower than the national average, western Sydney as a region continues to be a growing trend. Western Sydney is considered to be a diabetes "hot-spot" with over 200,000 people, or a quarter of the population likely to have diabetes or pre-diabetes. By 2025 it has been estimated that the prevalence of diabetes will be 204 per cent higher in men and 147 per cent higher in women.

Local resident, Caroline Neary, aged 70 has Type 2 diabetes and explains, "I've had diabetes for the past 15 years and am always keen to learn as much information as I can to help manage it".

"I heard about the new diabetes educator after visiting my local pharmacy and after just having my first consultation with Sharon, felt that I would like to see her again to find out the next steps for me. My advice to anyone who is newly diagnosed or unsure about diabetes is to speak to Sharon as she is a good first base, and makes you feel very comfortable", said Mrs Neary.

Sharon McClelland, Nurse and Credentialed Diabetes Educator explains, "With the growth and expansion of western Sydney, the project is set up to help those in the Rouse Hill area diagnosed with diabetes, to minimise the impact on their everyday lives". "It also aims to provide education to help prevent a new diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes".

For those interested in a consultation with Sharon, please email:

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**About WentWest**

WentWest's focus on providing better health care in the community was strengthened with its appointment as a Tranche 1 Medicare Local in July 2011 to now operating as the Western Sydney Primary Health Network. WentWest has built on its experience as a Division of General Practice in supporting GPs and their practices, connecting health services to meet local needs, and striving for better health outcomes for western Sydney.

The population living in western Sydney is culturally, linguistically and socio-economically diverse, and we also have the largest urban Aboriginal community in Australia. WentWest works closely with doctors, allied health professionals, the Western Sydney Local Health District and many others to improve the coordination of local health services for patients and their families.