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AusDiab: On the move again

What is the AusDiab follow-up?

The Australian Diabetes Obesity and Lifestyle Study (AusDiab), conducted by the International Diabetes Institute (IDI) in 1999/2000 showed a population which is decidedly unhealthy.

- Almost 1 in every 4 Australians over 25 has diabetes or impaired glucose metabolism, a condition which increases the immediate risk of heart disease and typically leads to diabetes in later life
- The number of adults with diabetes has trebled since 1981
- Approximately 60% of the adult population is overweight or obese
- more than 50% have high cholesterol levels
- 50% do not exercise enough, and
- 1 person in every six participates in no physical activity at all.

The results of this study provided Australia with its first snap shot of the health of the national population. The second phase of this study involves revisiting as many as possible of the 11,247 people who took part in the AusDiab study. By taking a series of tests and measurements, our researchers will be able to monitor any improvements or declines in the participants' health. This will help us identify those at greatest risk of developing diabetes and its related diseases in the future. In those who had diabetes five years ago, we will be able to monitor any improvements brought about by dietary and/or lifestyle changes, and chart the progress of their disease.



The AusDiab Partnership Meeting 2003

AusDiab Partnership Meeting

The 4th annual Australia @ Risk meeting will be held on the 25th / 26th November, 2004. The annual dinner and workshop gives us an opportunity to provide feedback on the progress of AusDiab and the latest findings, to all of our sponsors. The partnership meeting is an invaluable opportunity for us to re-ignite and strengthen the link between the survey team, supporters of AusDiab and collaborating partners. Brainstorming, generating ideas for further analysis and feedback on the conduct of the study are all critical aspects of this meeting. Many of the researchers working on AusDiab data around Australia will use this meeting as an opportunity to give updates on their ongoing work. In addition, the progress of the partner studies (DRUID: a diabetes study of the urban indigenous population of Darwin and Crossroads: a diabetes study in rural Victoria) will be reported. The venue for the annual meeting will once again be the Royce Hotel in St Kilda.

Who is involved in running AusDiab?

Chief Investigators

Paul Zimmet	Director, IDI
Jonathan Shaw	Director of Research, IDI
Tim Welborn	Clinical Professor of Medicine, University of Western Australia
Bob Atkins	Professor of Nephrology, Monash Medical Centre

State contact partners

Liz Bingham	Tasmania
Stephen Colagiuri	New South Wales
Kerin O'Dea	Northern Territory
Terry Coyne	Queensland
Pat Phillips	South Australia
Tim Welborn	Western Australia

AusDiab Field Testing Team

Annaliese Bonney	Complications testing
Nicole Meinig	Field project officer
Theresa Whalen	Field coordinator

Partners helping with specific project areas

Bob Atkins, Steven Chadban, Kevan Polkinghorne	AusDiab renal study
Theresa Dolphin, Tien Wong	Retinal photography
David Dunstan, Neville Owen, Jo Salmon	Physical activity
Damien Jolley	Statistical advice
Adam Meehan	Data verification system
Australian Institute of Health & Welfare	National death index tracking

IDI staff at AusDiab HQ, Melbourne

Liz Barr	Epidemiologist
Adrian Cameron	Epidemiologist
Sue Fournel	Project officer
Shirley Murray	Project manager
Ray Spark	Biochemical testing and pathology liaison officer

Logistics and Pathology Contractors

Allanby Press	Printing house
Gribbles Pathology	Pathology partner
Hertz	Hire cars
Integrity Mailing Solutions	Mail house
Wridgways	Freight

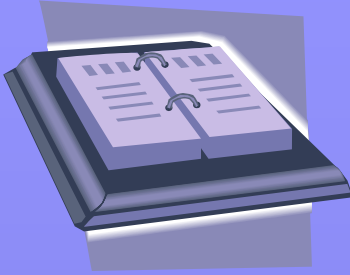
Participant Recruitment Strategies

- Ongoing annual contact with participants, was implemented at the end of 2002.
- A letter with a self completed questionnaire is sent. The main data required from this questionnaire are changes to contact details and details of next of kin who may be contacted if no response from participant from future mail outs. If no response to this letter is received, then it is followed up by a telephone call.
- Assistance has been sought in the past and will be sought again following the Federal election, from the Australian Electoral Commission to find those participants whom we have lost contact with.



An AusDiab testing site

THE INVITATION PROCESS



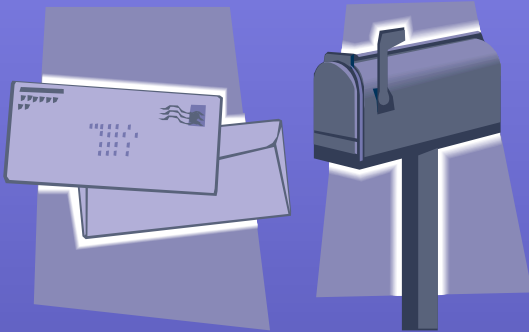
6 weeks prior to surveying in each site, all participants (except those who have refused participation since the baseline survey and known deaths) are sent an invitation letter detailing a pre-defined date and time for their survey appointment as well as two information brochures and a reply paid envelope.



All cancellations are followed up by phone on receipt of their letter. Participants are thanked for their response and a reason for withdrawal is ascertained. Since the original study of 1999/2000 many participants have moved to areas that are no longer close to a testing site. Contact with these participants is made by us and they are encouraged to participate by attending a Gribbles pathology centre close-by.



Four weeks prior to testing, a second letter is sent, confirming appointments for those who have already responded and reminding those we have not heard from that we would like a response.



If no response has been received two weeks prior to testing, participants are telephoned.



Two to three days prior to testing, a member of the field survey team makes a courtesy phone call to each confirmed participant (leaving a message if necessary), reminding them of their upcoming scheduled appointment.



If a participant fails to arrive at the testing site on their allocated date, another phone call is made to try and re-organise the appointment at another time.

Timetable

Rationale and choice of testing times:

Based on the testing sites in the baseline AusDiab survey, 6 sites are allocated in each of the 6 states and the Northern Territory. A 17 month testing schedule was established 9 months in advance to starting. This allowed us to maximise the use of weekend testing and to avoid public holidays. Sites used in the 1999/2000 were followed up to check on their availability and to ensure that no structural changes had occurred which would impact on the survey work being undertaken. If these sites were not suitable, then alternative sites were found as close as possible to the original site.

Casual Field Staff

Hiring and training of casual field staff is organised well in advance of survey work commencing. Seek.com.au has been used for recruiting field staff in Victoria, Western Australia and New South Wales and has proven to be a simple and highly effective strategy of recruiting a talented survey team in each of these states.

Two full days are allocated for staff training prior to commencement of testing in each state.

Dates of Testing

VICTORIA	June 05, 2004 – July 26, 2004
WESTERN AUSTRALIA	August 21, 2004 – October 10, 2004
NEW SOUTH WALES	November 5, 2004 – December 15, 2004
TASMANIA	January 23, 2005 – March 23, 2005
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	April 14, 2005 – May 31, 2005
NORTHERN TERRITORY	July 2, 2005 – August 14, 2005
QUEENSLAND	September 15, 2005 – October 20, 2005



Moving house in Australia — how does this affect AusDiab?

The success of AusDiab is largely reliant on us tracking the 11,247 participants involved in the original survey in 1999-2000. We cannot invite back for re-testing those who we are no longer in contact with. The Living in Australia Study, conducted by the Melbourne Institute, AC Nielsen and the University of Melbourne has shown that nearly 20% of the Australian population moves house each year, making the task of tracking 11,247 Australians a difficult one. To ensure that we maintain maximum participation in the AusDiab study, it is important that we remain in contact with as many of those who have moved house as possible. The main ways we do this are state based follow-up letters, searching the electoral role and searching the national Telstra database.

Moving house is often associated with other changes in life, such as purchasing a house, moving in with a partner, changing jobs, beginning study or moving out on your own. Most people have been shown to move quite short distances (43 percent of moves are less than 5 kilometres). The following is a table of results from the Living in Australia study, showing a breakdown of why people move and how far they travel.

An indication of the magnitude of the problem moving house causes to the follow-up of the AusDiab cohort is the fact that over 2500 participants have changed their address in the five years since the study began. The white pages online and on disc, as well as the electoral role database are useful tools in ensuring that all those AusDiab participants who move are kept updated on our database.

DISTANCE AND REASON FOR MOVE*

Reason for move	Proportion of movers (%)	Typical distance moved (kms)
Housing	51	4
Personal/family	34	13
Work/education	16	77
Neighbourhood	7	8



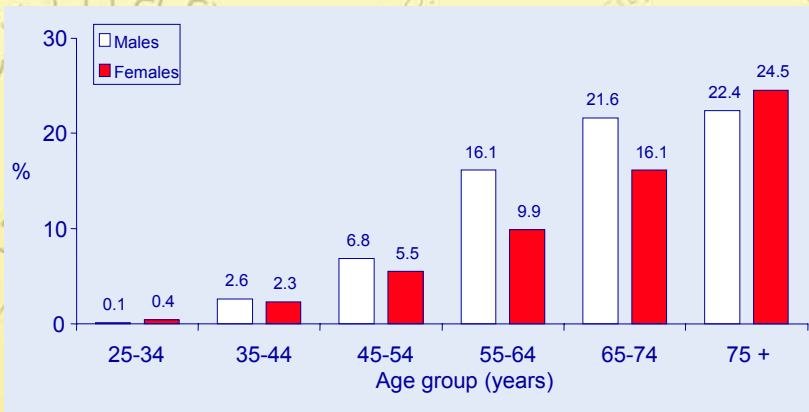
* Data from the Living in Australia study 2001 - 2002

AusDiab Innovations

Some of the innovations that have been implemented in the AusDiab follow-up study include:

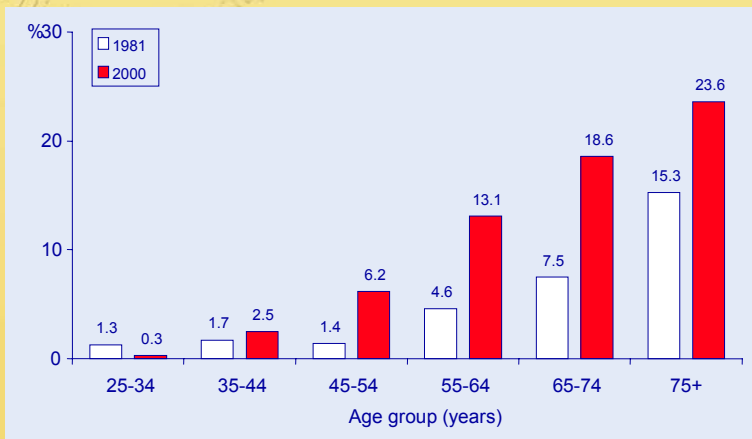
- The use of scannable data answer forms means that data entry, data checking and verification of results **on-site** has become a reality. An advanced data query system has been developed by Adam Meehan through our partnership with Monash University Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine.
- Tracking of AusDiab participants now uses both the Australian Electoral Commission and National Death Index, with data matching enabling us to effectively follow participants Australia-wide.

What has AusDiab shown us so far?



Prevalence of diabetes among Australians over 25 years of age

Trends of obesity prevalence among males and females since 1980



Change in the prevalence of diabetes among Australians over the past 20 years

Ratio of known to newly diagnosed diabetes among Australians by age group

