

## Diabetes researcher reminds mums with diabetes to focus on their health

**Embargo: 10.00am AEDST – 8.30am ACST 13 November 2017**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who had diabetes in pregnancy and are planning for another child are urged to continue engaging with their health practitioners to ensure the best health outcomes for them and their future children.

In conjunction with World Diabetes Day on 14 November, Menzies School of Health Research principal research fellow Associate Professor Louise Maple-Brown reminded mothers and health professionals that women's health is important, especially when complicated by diabetes.

"We have found about a third of women who had diabetes in pregnancy will follow up with their health practitioners after they have their babies," said Assoc Prof Maple-Brown, who is the chief investigator of the Northern Territory and Far North Queensland Diabetes in Pregnancy Partnership.

"There is currently a gap in practice. The focus after birth is often on the child, but the mother is just as important. It is the perfect time to engage them and continue their relationship with health practitioners."

Assoc Prof Maple-Brown said the Northern Territory and Far North Queensland Diabetes in Pregnancy Partnership was currently focused on models of care following birth to improve maternal health for subsequent pregnancies.

"Good preconception health before the next pregnancy can help lower the risk of their children developing long-term conditions like diabetes or obesity," she said, adding 20 per cent of Aboriginal women have diabetes in pregnancy in the Northern Territory.

"Looking after the health of the mother can improve the health of the entire family."

Co-chief investigator on the Diabetes in Pregnancy Partnership, Dr Christine Connors, said healthcare practitioners including maternal and child health nurses, general practitioners and Aboriginal health practitioners were the key workforce in assisting women to improve their health between pregnancies.

"The primary health care workforce in the Territory has been very involved and engaged in education about diabetes in pregnancy and improving their care," Dr Connors said.

"We are confident they will be just as focused on improving care for women between pregnancies."

More information about the Diabetes in Pregnancy Partnership is available at [dipp.org.au](http://dipp.org.au)

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**Note:** Associate Professor Louise Maple-Brown is available for interview on Monday, 13 November 2017.

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**Menzies School of Health Research**

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