

World-leading research centre in Perth offers new hope to children living with type 1 diabetes

Australia is set to become the global hub for research into type 1 diabetes (T1D) in children, with the launch of the Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre, A JDRF Global Centre of Excellence, based in Perth.

Thanks to an \$8 million multi-year partnership between Rio Tinto, JDRF Australia, Telethon Trust, Telethon Kids Institute and Perth Children's Hospital, children with T1D will be able to access world-first studies and trials and the latest research results from around the globe.

The Rio Tinto Children's Diabetes Centre is the first JDRF Global Centre of Excellence outside North America and the only centre in the world with a clinical and paediatric focus. Based at Telethon Kids Institute and Perth Children's Hospital, the Centre is supported by five national and global institutions and hospitals.

Launching this National Diabetes Week (10-16 July), the Centre is an integrated clinical and research centre bringing research, education, clinical care and community together to improve the lives of children living with T1D.

Leading paediatric endocrinologists and diabetes researchers Professor Liz Davis and Professor Tim Jones, from Perth Children's Hospital and Telethon Kids Institute, are heading up the work of the Centre of Excellence with a vision to improve the life expectancy for kids with T1D and reduce the burden of the disease.

"Traditionally there has been a 15 to 20-year lag for new research to be put into clinical practice," Professor Davis said.

"This Centre aims to close the gap in translating research into state-of-the-art clinical care as well as closing the over 10-year gap in life expectancy for children with T1D."

Professor Jones said the Centre brings together critical elements to better understand and change the way we treat T1D by developing personalised models of care that are tailored to individuals.

"We will work with world-class researchers, clinicians and a diabetes community passionate for innovation to deliver the right treatment, to the right person, at the right time," said Professor Jones.

"A focus of the Centre will also be modelling the economic impacts of T1D on the child, family and community and evaluate how new treatments and technologies can reduce that impact."

JDRF Chief Scientific Officer, Dr Dorota Pawlak, said it was great to have a JDRF Centre of Excellence here in Australia where world-class T1D research is underway.

RIO TINTO CHILDREN'S DIABETES CENTRE

A J D R F G l o b a l C e n t r e o f E x c e l l e n c e



“Centres of Excellence are a new concept aiming to accelerate critical type 1 diabetes research into clinic and promote effective international collaborations,” said Dr Pawlak.

JDRF CEO, Mike Wilson OAM, believes this is an important step towards transforming T1D care for families impacted by the condition.

“The Centre of Excellence will ensure young people in Australia with type 1 diabetes have faster, more equitable access to new technologies and breakthroughs,” said Mr Wilson.

Rio Tinto Vice President of Health Safety, Environment and Communities, Cecile Thaxter, said this partnership was a great opportunity for Rio Tinto to support many of their own families living with T1D as well as children from around WA, Australia and globally.

“We are particularly excited to support the Centre’s work in innovation and technology advancements to make type 1 diabetes management easier, improve the quality of life and reduce the burden of this relentless 24/7 condition on the child and their family,” said Ms Thaxter.

This partnership is part of a bigger, multi-year investment from Rio Tinto with the Telethon Trust and Telethon Kids Institute, aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of children across Australia.

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About the Rio Tinto Children’s Diabetes Centre, A JDRF Global Centre of Excellence

The Rio Tinto Children’s Diabetes Centre: A JDRF Global Centre of Excellence (The Centre), based at Perth Children’s Hospital and the Telethon Kids Institute, is an integrated clinical and research centre conducting research into diabetes. Our goal is to improve the lives of all young people living with diabetes and their families by bringing together research, education, clinical care and community. This Centre will be a world-leading initiative building on the excellent team, experience and connections already in place at Telethon Kids Institute and the partner sites in Australia: Macquarie University, Monash University, Women’s and Children’s Health Network South Australia, Children’s Health Queensland, and internationally; Harvard University in Boston, USA.

Type one diabetes (T1D) is a chronic autoimmune disease that results from the immune system attacking the insulin-producing cells of the pancreas. Currently, T1D cannot be prevented but it can be managed by administering insulin, monitoring glucose levels, having a healthy, balanced diet, and getting regular physical activity. There are more than 125,000 Australians living with T1D, with 8 diagnosed each day. In WA, about 160 children are diagnosed with T1D diabetes every year.

The Rio Tinto Children’s Diabetes Centre also works in type 2 diabetes research for children.

Visit www.childrensdiabetescentre.org.au and www.jdrf.org.au

MEDIA CONTACTS

Felicity Bond

M: +61 402 621 457

E: felicity.bond@telethonkids.org.au