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**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Sleep Health Warning:**

### **Diabetes and Sleep Apnea Link Confirmed**

An urgent call to action was made today by The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) warning recent research confirms type 2 diabetes and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) are closely related.

Estimates suggest that up to 40% of people with OSA will have diabetes. Conversely, it is likely that more than half of the people with type 2 diabetes suffer some form of sleep disorder. Hundreds of thousands of Australians are suspected as having both these conditions, therefore urgent attention is required to diagnose and treat the unrecognised cases.

The IDF Consensus Statement released at the American Diabetes Association (ADA) 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Session in San Francisco has called on health decision makers to encourage further research into the links between the two conditions and urges healthcare professionals to adopt new clinical practices to ensure that a person with one condition is considered for the other.

According to lead author of the IDF Consensus Statement and Deputy Director of the International Diabetes Institute in Melbourne, Australia, Associate Professor Jonathan Shaw "the combination of sleep apnoea and diabetes leads to greater difficulty in controlling each condition and an increased risk of heart disease and stroke". Sleep apnoea occurs when breathing is regularly interrupted during sleep, and is often accompanied by snoring and recent research suggests it may make diabetes more difficult to control.

The economic cost of sleep disorders is alarming with estimates suggesting more than 6% of the Australian population has a chronic sleep disorder, at a total cost of \$7.5 billion. Over 80% of patients with moderate to severe OSA are thought to be undiagnosed and contributing to significant use of medical services.

ResMed sleep research scientist Dr Carmel Harrington sees the announcement as an important step forward. "Patients benefit because the separate medical silos of endocrinology, cardiology and sleep have converged to address these interrelated health conditions."

Dr Harrington believes awareness of sleep disorders also needs to be elevated. "Many of the obvious symptoms including snoring and dozing off during the day are often overlooked and should be taken very seriously. Currently, we're only treating the tip of the ice-berg when it comes to sleep disorders as public awareness remains, unfortunately, very low."



In response to the IDF findings, a new website which provides health professionals and the public with comprehensive information on the disorders was launched today by ResMed. The site [healthysleepanddiabetes.com](http://healthysleepanddiabetes.com) includes a simple preliminary test for anyone who suspects they may have symptoms of Obstructive Sleep Apnea. **END**