



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP**  
**Minister for Health and Ageing**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**More Assistance for Children With Type 1 Diabetes**

Families with children with type 1 diabetes will benefit from the Rudd Government's announcement today that it is increasing the maximum subsidy for the purchase of an insulin pump for children under 18.

The Type 1 Diabetes Insulin Pump Program is an innovative initiative - started under the Rudd Government - which delivers relief for families managing juvenile type 1 diabetes.

After consultation with stakeholders, changes announced today increase the subsidy for those most in need, and target it at those requiring the greatest assistance.

The maximum subsidy, under the Type 1 Diabetes Insulin Pump Program, has been raised from \$2,500 to \$6,400 (or 80 per cent of the pump price) and is available to successful applicants who have an annual family income of up to \$64,240.

The level of the subsidy operates on a sliding scale, gradually reducing to \$500, or 10 per cent of the pump cost (whichever is greater), for families with an income of \$101,045.

Insulin pumps are expensive - ranging in cost between \$4000 and \$8000.

This boost to the program will ease the financial pressure on families when purchasing a pump for their child.

The number of Australian children being diagnosed with this disease is increasing by 3% every year. There is no cure and unlike many cases of type 2 diabetes, it is not caused by diet or lifestyle.

Managing type 1 diabetes can be incredibly challenging for children and parents alike and I am pleased that we can make this funding available to relieve some of the pressure on these families.

Whilst insulin pumps are not always the best therapy for all people with type 1 diabetes, they are considered as an optimal treatment for young people with type 1 diabetes - particularly where the diabetes is difficult to manage.

An insulin pump significantly improves the health of users by making it easier to control their condition and live regular healthy, active lives. It also provides parents with piece of mind that their child's condition is being managed appropriately.

In addition to the subsidy boost, eligible families with two or more children with type 1 diabetes will now be entitled to the calculated subsidy for the first child and the maximum subsidy for subsequent children irrespective of the family's income.

The Rudd Government is committed to supporting people with diabetes. In the 2009-10 financial year expenditure on medicines such as insulin through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme is expected to be around \$300 million. Government expenditure on products through the National Diabetes Service Scheme is expected to be about \$130 million.

A total of \$5.5 million has been provided for the program between 2008-09 and 2011-12 and it is expected that about 470 insulin pumps will be subsidised over this four-year period.

**Media inquiries, please contact the Minister's Office on 0418259602.**

*Also of interest may be the article published in the Lancet, (available online at [www.thelancet.com](http://www.thelancet.com)) 'Closed -loop 'artificial pancreas' system can improve blood sugar control in young patients with type 1 diabetes.*