



Kellion Victory Medal

2025

Thursday 23 October 2025

Diabetes
SA Support
Always



Welcome

With the Kellion Victory Medal we honour members of our community who have lived with diabetes for 50 years or more. We also acknowledge the extraordinary contribution that carers make to the health and wellbeing of people living with diabetes.

Receiving a Kellion Victory Medal marks an exceptional achievement. All of us at Diabetes Australia are delighted to celebrate the journey of so many remarkable Australians this year. In 2021, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the discovery of the medical use of insulin in humans. Without a doubt, this discovery has saved millions of lives and is considered one of the greatest medical advances of all time.

Since then, there have been amazing advancements in diabetes management and technologies, as well as in diabetes education. We now know that people can live well with diabetes and each year we see more and more people receiving a medal – testimony to the fact that living a long, healthy and productive life with diabetes is indeed possible.

Many congratulations to you all!

I trust that you will enjoy this special occasion and wish you many more years of good health.

Justine Cain,
Diabetes Australia
Group Chief Executive Officer

Dr Ashley Ng,
Kellion Advisory
Council Chair

Kellion Victory Medal

Each year the Diabetes Australia Kellion Victory Medal is presented by Diabetes SA for South Australian recipients who have lived with type 1 or type 2 diabetes for 50 years or more. It recognises the achievement of living a fulfilling life with diabetes.

Silver	50-year medal
Gold	60-year medal
Platinum	70-year medal
Diamond	75-year medal
Pearl	80-year medal
Ruby	85-year medal
Lapis	90-year medal
Emerald	95-year medal
Centennial	100-year medal

Medal Recipients

80 Years

Geoffrey Koch

70 Year Recipient

John Balnaves

60 Year Recipient

Leanne Adler

Veronica Duffy

Lesley Hendrickson

Jill Owens

Barabara White

Caroline Arnold

Anthea Whyte

50 Year Recipient

Thomas Whittle

Janis Matthews

Janice Mudge

Michelle Hargreaves

Daniel Earle

Trevor Anderson

David Hissey

Rosslyn Hewitson

Supporters Award

Beverley Koch

Harry Whyte

Carl Adler

Dr Anthony Zimmerman

John Arnold

Angela Whittle

Isla Yiannoullo

Glenys Anderson

Trish Hissey

Michael Hewitson

Geoffrey Koch

80 Year Recipient



“ It is a reminder to me and others that it is possible to live for 80 years as a type 1 diabetic.

I was diagnosed in January 1945. I remember my mother telling me that it was around the age of 2 years old.

I was diagnosed by Dr Brian Wibberley in Tumby Bay, after my mother was concerned about the amount of water I was drinking.

I was referred to Dr Hetzel and admitted to the Memorial Hospital. I can still remember the horror of injections and thought that they would end when I went home – but alas they continued.

Dr Hetzel advised my mother that I might only live for 10 years.

I started doing my own injections when I was 4. Schooling was by correspondence because little was known in schools about diabetes. In grade 6 I was allowed to go into school by bus for woodworking classes.

The Insulin pump and CGM have helped tremendously, as did my mother and wife who understood diet, as well as relatives who grew to know of hypo-symptoms.

Despite my diabetes, I managed to farm for about 40 years. I played tennis and table tennis, learnt how to weld and repair machinery and do home improvements.

This medal is a reminder to me and others that it is possible to live for 80 years as a type 1 diabetic.

Leanne Adler

60 Year Recipient

“ I feel the Kellion Victory Medal is a HUGE reward for all the blood, sweat, ketones, comas, complications and insulin I have had to go through.

Being diagnosed as a baby, I don't remember anything. Mum used to play hide & seek with me and if I was found, she could give me my injection.

The changes I have seen over my life have been amazing to say the least.

I remember having to do the 5 drops of urine and 10 drops of water in a glass tube with a HOT fizzy tablet to test my sugar, then progressed to a urine stick with 8–10 little test squares.

I also had a brick called a “Gluco meter” and now, OMG, my pump is the be-all and end-all for me.

Also, my CGM – I don't feel like a pin cushion anymore.

I had an amazing endocrinologist in Dr Richard Burnet. He was there from a very young age until his passing. He was more than a doctor to me – he was there for everything.

I thank my husband, for putting up with a lot – more than anyone should. He is my rock always.

Having a baby was a huge achievement for me, still having all my fingers and toes and receiving my 50-year Kellion Medal – that was a big one for me. Also seeing the Crows play live!

I feel the Kellion Victory Medal is a HUGE reward for all the blood, sweat, ketones, comas, complications and insulin I have had to go through.

But an easy path it has not been for those nearest and dearest to me, so I know they must feel proud for me having reached this milestone.

See you all in 10 years time!

Veronica Duffy

60 Year Recipient

“ Here I am now receiving and reaching 60 years of being a type I diabetic. “What an achievement!”

Tell tale signs were there of me passing out, being very thirsty and urinating frequently. My mum picked it up quickly because they were all the same things my father had. My father was a type 1 diabetic for 50 odd years.

My father taught me and helped me through some difficult times. He was my mentor in my early years. He taught me how to inject insulin, portioning food to control sugar levels which back then was done by urine testing only.

The invention of the blood testing machines was a huge development that I have seen over the years.

One of my achievements was the year I received the 50 year Kellion medal. Also my marriage to husband Daniel who stood by me every step of the way and my two wonderful children Ryan and Kate.

When I received the 50-year medal I thought this is it, I will never reach the 60-year medal, but here I am now receiving and reaching 60 years of being a type I diabetic. “What an achievement!”

Barbara White

60 Year Recipient

“ After diagnosis I carried on as before, socializing, playing sport with my boyfriend and friends.

After weeks of excessive tiredness I was finally diagnosed with T1 diabetes. This was in mid-June 1958, aged nearly 18. I spent the next 10 days in the Tanunda hospital. My mother died when I was only 13, my father still grieving when I was diagnosed and brother and sister were away studying.

After diagnosis I carried on as before, socializing, playing sport with my boyfriend and friends, but can't even remember what brand of insulin I used or how many injections a day I had.

Following from my faithful Glucometer of many years came my Freestyle Libre in December 2018 (I think) and then my wonderful Freestyle Libre 2 - I can't praise it enough.

The most important person who helped me was Brian, my late husband of 46 years. He somehow sensed when I was low and urged me to use my Glucometer.

I gave birth to 7 daughters via Caesarean, with 2 unable to survive after 36 hours. I have been able to lead a very healthy life and I have now resided in TLH for 5 years.

This medal is recognition and acknowledgment of all the ways I have been able to lead a healthy life.

Jillian Owens

60 Year Recipient



“ It is a reminder to me and others that it is possible to live for 80 years as a type 1 diabetic.

I was 13 when I was diagnosed and living in Broken Hill.

My teacher told my mother that I was always tired at school and nearly falling asleep in class. I remember also being really thirsty all the time.

I remember testing my urine all the time and having injections with syringes and quite large needles.

Things have progressed since then – I now use an insulin pen and a continuous glucose monitor (which has helped a lot).

I can't really remember what it was like when I was younger – I just got on with life. I do remember my mother being very strict with my diet and always measuring “portions” methodically.

Having an insulin pen is much better than having to draw up insulin with a

syringe. The CGM is also very good I can see what my BGL is at any time and also am warned when my level is low, thus preventing losing consciousness.

My mother was a great help, always keeping an eye on me and making sure I ate the right food. I am also grateful to my friends and workmates who always knew when I was having a hypo (before the CGM) and made sure I had some glucose.

Still being alive and reasonably well after 60 years living with diabetes is a great achievement. I was also able to hold good employment for over 30 years and do volunteer work at Meals on Wheels for a number of years.

It's nice to be recognised for living with Type 1 diabetes for so long!

Michelle Hargreaves

50 Year Recipient



“Hypo treatment was milk and sugar back then and my diet included 6 meals per day.

I was the second child in Whyalla diagnosed with Juvenile diabetes. I started losing weight, was lathargic with polyuria, nocturia and ketotic breath developed in 1 week. I was taken to Whyalla Hospital, treated and educated over the course of 1 week by nurses. I disliked hospital and left with my arm strapped to a board where insulin and fluids were administered via a needle and not a cannula.

I was told off because I ate a slice of toast with jam on it that a boy across from me offered. I went to a craft room daily and did hobby text. My family were shocked and concerned about my long term health.

In the early days I used syringes to draw up insulin with a large needle, then a smaller needle to inject myself into my thighs. I administered insulin once a day as only long-lasting insulin was available. Urine was tested using Aims Tablets with drops of urine and water into a test tube. Colour advised of how much sugar was in my body.

Hypo treatment was milk and sugar back then and my diet included 6 meals per day. I was advised to eat fat and limit CHO. Exercise was not discussed.

I attended a Children's Camp at 8 years of age and at 21 commenced using Novo Pens with Protaphane & Actrapid fixed doses. My first BGM was a plug into wall and now using CSII & CGMS.

My parents and siblings helped to give me independence, made me believe that I am not different and can accomplish anything. Camps also helped, having professional education and other children helped grow my confidence and knowledge. My Endocrinologist has also brought a wealth of knowledge, trying different insulin and different technology and my Husband has given huge encouragement.

Despite my diabetes, I have still been able to travel and have empathy for others with a chronic disease.

Anthea Whyte

60 Year Recipient

“ It is nice to be recognised as someone who has lived with diabetes for such a long time, witnessing changes in treatment, monitoring and technology over this period of time.

I was diagnosed age 3 years while living in the United Kingdom. I was too young to remember exactly how I was diagnosed but remember spending a lot of time in hospital when I was young. My grandfather used to give me my insulin injections.

I spent a lot of time in hospital. I was unable to monitor my sugar levels because glucometers had not yet been invented.

I started the Freestyle Libre 2 CGM this year. It has been a game changer, as I can monitor for low glucose levels which have plagued my life with diabetes, especially overnight.

My husband Harry has rescued me on many occasions and been helpful in me achieving as near normal life as possible living with diabetes.

I have 2 adult children, and 3 grandchildren who have also been very supportive.

Moving to Australia in 1988. I am now an Australian citizen and call Australia home.

It is nice to be recognised as someone who has lived with diabetes for such a long time, witnessing changes in treatment, monitoring and technology over this period of time.

Thomas Whittle

50 Year Recipient



“ I was fortunate to have some good medical professionals and peer learning opportunities, which were rare in those days.

I was diagnosed in 1975, when I was admitted to the Adelaide Children's Hospital where I was diagnosed with TYPE 1 Diabetes and received my first insulin injection.

My half-sister Mary Veronica Whittle, who was 17 years older than me, had Type 1 diabetes and I had grown up watching her have injections and knew that Type 1 diabetes treatment was for life and included horrid glass-filled injections daily. I was devastated when I realised that was now what I would have to endure.

My mother was given the responsibility of looking after my diabetes but unfortunately she had an undiagnosed mental illness. I soon learnt to be as independent in my management as I could and was fortunate to have some good medical professionals and peer learning opportunities, which were rare in those days.

Because of my mother's mental illness I was forced to hide my diabetes from school friends and teachers alike. This had a disastrous impact on my diabetes management and my mental health as well.

I therefore had poor diabetic control until my late teens, when I met my wife Angela. With her support and courage, I was able to become independent with my diabetes management and free from the influence of my mother's "teaching".

I have been using the AndroidAPS DIY closed loop system since 2018 with Dexcom G5 and G6 CGM. This system has given me the most consistent and flexible control of my diabetes.

My wife Angela initially assisted me to break free from "illness shame" promoted by my mother and her family. She then encouraged me to attend

lectures on diabetes and diet and take better care of myself physically and mentally.

With diabetes, I have been able to continue to work into my sixties and I have survived a heart attack. I have travelled to Europe multiple times and been to many remote places.

I have a greater confidence in my management plan than most due to the bad start that has caused me to rethink and the support from my wife.

This illness requires a lot of ongoing work from the individual. This is poorly recognised by those outside of the medical field.

This medal will give me a sense of achievement and recognition that I just do not get from my friends and co-workers.

Janice Mudge

50 Year Recipient



“ My three children have always been supportive. They still find it odd that people put sugar in custard or add it to Milo drinks.

I was diagnosed in 1970. I was pregnant with my first child who was born three weeks early on 28 August 1970.

My G.P. Dr John Moore detected glucose in my urine. I had a G.T.T. It was a surprise for my mother – quite a shock, as there was no family history of diabetes. I really knew very little about diabetes so wasn't terribly concerned. Mostly I was annoyed about not being able to eat sugar – I loved cooking sweet things.

For the next 4 years I was only taking tablets, so there wasn't anything stopping me. I saw Dr. Burston yearly, had a blood test and continued being active and healthy.

My 2nd child was also a C-section and 3 weeks early, weighing 1016g. Clearly I had diabetes but I didn't fit the pattern for either Type 1 or Type 2.

My 3rd child came at 41 weeks weighing 4160g. It was time for insulin.

So many modern things have made a difference: No more urine tests on sticks, finger pricks, monitors. No more drawing up insulin with syringes – insulin pens No. 1! The flexibility of short-acting insulin, the change from animal to human insulin and access to as much information and assistance as I desire through DSA and NDSS. I am new to having a sensor but I'm sure it will help a lot.

My three children have always been supportive. They still find it odd that people put sugar in custard or add it to Milo drinks. In the early days they came to an information clinic with me to learn how to recognise and treat hypos. I have also been incredibly fortunate to have three great Endos over 54 years:

Dr Burston got me through my pregnancies and started me on insulin (the latter was difficult to accept). Dr Bill Jeffries introduced me to ideas in management and was always encouraging.

My current, exemplary endocrinologist is Dr. Anthony Zimmermann who has encouraged and supported me at every step.

I have three wonderful children who provide me joy and frustration in equal measures. When they all finished school, I went back to high school at age 44. I successfully completed Year 12 and progressed to Adelaide University where I achieved an M.A. in Applied Historical Studies.

I worked as a Collection Curator for 10 years and in 1999 I went on my first overseas flight. I was away for 7 weeks to Paris and the U.K. where I met cousins for the first time.

To me the receipt of a Kellion medal is like joining a very special club. It is proof to me and I hope to many others, that living with diabetes is not the end of a happy, fulfilling life. It is a cheer out, sincere thanks to all the people that have encouraged, supported, assisted me over the years.

Rosslyn Hewitson

50 Year Recipient

“ All those years ago Dr Butler taught me that I could eat anything as long as I had the correct amount of insulin.

I went into premature labour at 16 weeks and spent the next 16 weeks flat on my back in hospital until my daughter was born at 32 and a half weeks. I was diagnosed when I was admitted to the Whyalla Hospital. I was flown to Adelaide where she was delivered and Dr Randall Butler took over my diabetic management. He taught me so much.

It came as a big shock, until meeting Dr Randall Butler, he gave me a very positive way of dealing with it. At the time he had an 18 year old son with diabetes. Before having linked up with Dr Butler, my endocrinologist in Whyalla had me on a portion diet, weighing everything and I couldn't look at another Sao biscuit.

All those years ago Dr Butler taught me that I could eat anything as long as I had the correct amount of insulin. My husband has always been very supportive.

I have a very supportive husband and he encouraged me in every way. Testing back then was interesting with

Clinitest tablets. In 1985 I got my first meter which was like a brick and it took 2 minutes to get a reading. I was also on Pork and Beef insulin.

The new insulins have been amazing. I have Toujeo and Flasp. I was very grateful to the government for subsidising the Libre Sensors as for three years I was paying \$92.60 a fortnight.

My husband has been a never ending support and my former GP from Gawler Dr Rupert Thorne for 20 years.

I had a very successful teaching career. I was Head of the Preparatory School at Trinity College for 20 years and taught a Reception class as well. We also have four wonderful children and 12 grandchildren. I gave up teaching a couple of years earlier than I would have liked to be able to help look after the grandchildren, which I also found very rewarding. I have a wonderful relationship with each of them.

This is a recognition of 52 years of living with diabetes and celebrating the advances that have been made.

Janis Matthews

50 Year Recipient

“ Here I am now receiving and reaching 60 years of being a type I diabetic. “What an achievement!”

I attended Queen Elizabeth Hospital due to losing weight and polyuria. My family were encouraged to get checked out and in 1968 I was diagnosed with diabetes.

In the early days I tested urine in test tubes and had no option but to get on with life.

This medal is a great recognition of years of managing my diabetes.

Daniel Earle

50 Year Recipient



“ I love the Dexcom G7 – it’s changed my life and without having my vision but being able to hear my blood sugars/alarms on the phone keeps me safe.

I was diagnosed in 1966. I was on a school excursion in Victoria, in the Grampians bush walking – got very tired and lay down, turned out to be DKA. I remember being 14 years old, with a family history of Type 1 diabetes – cousin and grandfather were using insulin.

My parents were ashamed in the early years and tried to hide this from others. My family found it really tough with food and insulin management.

I love the Dexcom G7 – it’s changed my life and without having my vision but being able to hear my blood sugars/alarms on the phone keeps me safe.

My family, doctors (specialists and GP) and nurses have been instrumental in my care.

I don’t need a medal – my Diabetes Educator applied for me. I just want to wake up every morning!

David Hissey

50 Year Recipient



“ Being able to lead an active life without any restrictions as a result of diabetes has been my biggest achievement. It hasn't been easy but I haven't missed out on any of life's activities.

The day after my 21st birthday I was admitted to Modbury Hospital to begin my diabetes treatment.

I was having problems playing football, my eyesight was becoming blurred, forever thirsty, lack of energy and loss of weight.

Initially I struggled with looking after myself. Looking back now, I'm surprised I didn't have more problems.

The best improvement over the years is the Freestyle Libre 2 sensor.

My wife has been the best person to assist in managing my daily needs.

Being able to lead an active life without any restrictions as a result of diabetes has been my biggest achievement. It hasn't been easy but I haven't missed out on any of life's activities.

Today is a recognition of managing my diabetes, every hour, of every day, of every year.

Trevor Anderson

50 Year Recipient

“ Everything was quite complex compared to the simplicity of it currently.

Dr Cotton, from Northern Clinic, Para Hills diagnosed my diabetes with a test strip and urine sample in February of 1971.

I was feeling sick at work often and I went to the doctor three times in one week, and he finally did a urine sample. I felt very weak and worked under the buses at Hackney Bus Depot. I recall not being able to hold my arms above my head as I was too weak.

The same night I was diagnosed, I spent in the hospital. I was there for 2 weeks while they tried tablets and all sorts, but nothing worked – until they tried insulin.

The first years of my diagnosis were pretty hectic. I was given a glass syringe and two needles, which were to last me three months. I had to re-sharpen them all the time. I recall needing to do a urine sample and pop a tablet in a test tube every time I checked my blood sugar. Everything was quite complex compared to the simplicity of it currently.

The change in method for testing blood sugar levels has been the most helpful change in my experience. From urine samples, litmus paper, test dipping strips, finger pricks, to Libre 2 sensors. Keeping on top of my levels is much easier and less time consuming now compared to the beginning of my diabetic journey.

The needles on the injection pens are much finer now compared to the 26-gauge needles I used at the beginning. The insulin has changed a lot too, but I responded best to the old type derived from pigs.

My wife, Glenys, had an uncanny sense of when my sugar was going low. She would have a drink ready for me before I even finished mowing the lawn. My daughter Cindy also has the same keen sense.

My wonderful grandchildren help me by always checking in, reminding me to scan my sugar and let them know how it is. They always plan family events around my meal schedule.

Work colleagues have helped me to hospital at times. I had a great Professor Ian Chapman, who helped me manage my diabetes. I had 10 siblings and 4 of us were Type 1 diabetics. It was helpful to learn from their experiences and know I was not alone.

It has been an achievement to successfully manage my diabetes for over 50 years. As was having my daughter Cindy and marrying my wife Glenys. I worked at the bus depot as a sheet metal worker and travelled to China with my wife's Calisthenics team. For years I thought it impossible to manage my diabetes away from home in a foreign setting and dreaded trying to get through customs with all the paraphernalia. It wasn't all smooth but I am glad I had this experience.

My sister, Bernice Hardicker, won a silver and a gold Kellion Victory Medal, and I am following in her footsteps.

I hope this medal will help newly diagnosed diabetics to ease the shock, accept their diagnoses and feel reassured that they can manage the condition and lead a happy, healthy and fulfilling life.

John Balnaves
70 Year Recipient

The recipient has respectfully chosen not to share their story or picture.

Lesley Hendrickson
60 Year Recipient

The recipient has respectfully chosen not to share their story or picture.

Caroline Arnold
60 Year Recipient

The recipient has respectfully chosen not to share their story or picture.

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For more information visit
diabetesaustralia.com.au/kellion

