 Kelmscott researcher looking to unlock the secrets of diabetes

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A GROUP of WA researchers including Kelmscott resident Vance Matthews have been awarded funding to support their investigation into new ways of treating obesity and type 2 diabetes.

The researchers will use the $80,000 grant to attempt to tap into the body’s sympathetic nervous system.

Assistant Professor Matthews is part of the team from the faculty of the University of Western Australia’s School of Medicine and Pharmacology.

“We’ve recently generated exciting data which highlights for the first time that the sympathetic nervous system plays a role in regulating the major glucose reabsorption protein, sodium glucose co-transporter 2 or SGLT2, which is believed to be expressed exclusively in the kidney,” he said.

“The focus of this grant is to find out if we can develop ways to tap into the sympathetic nervous system and alter the expression of this protein because if we can do that, it opens up new avenues for treating obesity and type 2 diabetes.”

UWA Winthrop Professor and Head of the Dobney Hypertension Centre at Royal Perth Hospital, Markus Schlaich said with the burden of diabetes increasing rapidly, investing in research was critical.

“We have some incredible minds here in WA that are racing to uncover new ways to be able to prevent the avalanche of type 2 diabetes cases that are predicted to be diagnosed in the coming years and we are honoured to be able to be part of funding that progress,” she said.

Diabetes Research WA, based at Royal Perth Hospital, was established in 1976 to stimulate research into diabetes in Western Australia and has distributed more than $5 million dollars to research on the disease.