



Global Advocacy Diabetes

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DIABETES: PROTECT YOUR FAMILY



World Diabetes Day (WDD) has been running annually on November 14 since 1991 and this year's theme is 'Protect the Family'.

In 2006 WDD became an official United Nations Day, and the campaign reaches a global audience of over 1 billion people in more than 160 countries. WDD aims to draw attention to the issues caused by diabetes around the world and keeping the disease in the public and political spotlight.

WDD is a good time for elected representatives to raise the importance of prevention, early diagnosis and best treatments for all types of diabetes.

November 14th will soon be upon us and on page 5 we list some ideas from previous years.

Inside this issue: Asian Diabetes Epidemic, Pharmacists Helping Type 2 Patients go drug free, Amputations on the Rise, Insulin Cost Rises, and as usual lots of advocacy tips and ideas.



Deputy Speaker of the Maltese Parliament, Claudette Buttigieg MP, with Secretary General Adrian Sanders, and Co-Chairs Sir Michael Hirst and Chris Delicata after launching PDGN's New Focus and future Strategic Plan in Barcelona last month at the European Association for the Study of Diabetes annual event.

PDGN has refined its vision and mission to make stronger, more precise statements about its purpose.

We have begun to implement our new focus and 3-year strategic plan. that was the result of several months work with stakeholders working up achievable objectives consistent with our primary

objective to enable law-makers to help prevent diabetes, encourage early diagnosis, and improve treatments in every part of the world.

Claudette Buttigieg MP has agreed to be our European Lead as we pilot the continent with the new plan. More details on the last two pages of this edition.

Impact of Insulin Cost Rises

The cost of insulin nearly doubled between 2012 and 2016 leading to some US citizens with diabetes rationing their medicine to survive.

With a vial of insulin costing around \$300 in the United States, people prescribed with insulin for their diabetes have been hit hard with Hispanic, Asian and Black patients appearing to be the biggest victims of the unregulated price rises as they are less likely to be insured.

According to the American Medical Association, one in every four patients with diabetes are rationing their insulin.

Black, Hispanic and Asian people have been the biggest victims of the unregulated rise in the price of the essential drug as they are less likely to be insured. One in every four insulin dependent diabetes patients are rationing their vital supply, according to a study made by the Journal of American Medical Association.

Deaths have been associated with patients who have self-rationed because of the cost.

Despite the claims of the drug companies, Jeannie Fuglesten Biniek, a senior researcher at the Washington DC-based institute and the report's co-author, was quoted as saying by Reuters: "It's not that individuals are using more insulin or that new products are

particularly innovative or provide immense benefits."

Drug-makers claim they need to raise the US list prices to offset step rebates they have to offer to get insurance plan coverage.

Attempts have been made by politicians to bring in legislation to reduce medicine costs

but have so far not succeeded. At a State level the Attorney General of Minnesota sued three insulin manufacturers, accusing them of raising prices deceptively. The case is ongoing.

Advocacy Action – Are insulin prices rising in your country/region? How is that affecting your health care system? Are there any measures you could propose to ensure patients are never forced to ration their life saving drugs?



Pharmacists Helping Type 2 Patients go drug free

In our last issue we reported on the role of pharmacists as partners in meeting the challenge of diabetes.

The Pharmaceutical Journal reported last month that pharmacists can help patients with Type 2 diabetes adopt a low-carbohydrate diet and reduce their medicines load, but a policy document published by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and endorsed by Diabetes UK warns that specialist pharmacists across the NHS are vital for patient support



and the development of local and national strategy and further, they should be fully integrated into the care of people with type 2 across all care settings.

The call for greater pharmacy input within

multidisciplinary teams was made in '*Using pharmacists to help improve care for people with type 2 diabetes*', a policy document published by the RPS and endorsed by Diabetes UK, on 10 July 2019.

Advocacy Action – How well are pharmacists linked to care pathways and services in your country? Is there joint action you could take with your national pharmacy organisation?

Diabetes Epidemic in Asia

A survey conducted by Sun Life Financial among nearly 4,000 residents aged 25 and above from Hong Kong, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines identified that more and more people from Asia are being diagnosed with the diabetes and fastest rate of growth was found in the Philippines.

Our of a population of 100 million around 5 million Filipinos are diagnosed with diabetes. In 2017, around 50,000 Filipinos died due to diabetes-related complications such as kidney failure, heart failure, stroke, and heart attack. *The Science Times*, that described the figures as an

epidemic, advised readers that people need to keep in mind that diabetes is a lifelong disease. It will require maintenance, regular check-ups, a change in lifestyle, and numerous restrictions when it comes to food intake. Also, diabetes can be inherited, which is why health experts encourage people to live a healthy lifestyle as early as possible, in order not to pass it down to the next generation in their family. The change in the way that we eat can be one of the reasons to blame for the sudden increase in diabetic patients, especially in Asia. Food chains that are now globalized offer sweets and sugary drinks that are more

accessible than healthy food. It also does not help that for Asian countries, rice is a staple food, and rice has tons of sugar. Experts encourage people to eat more fruits and less sugary food, to drink more water instead of sodas, and to exercise more or at least be more active by walking or running to combat diabetes.

Advocacy Action – Ask your Government/State how fast diabetes is growing? What measures are being undertaken to reduce the rate of growth. Can you help publicise the prevention messages, perhaps working with diabetes organisations in your area.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are around 422 million people living with diabetes

worldwide. Between 1980 and 2016 the number of people with diabetes *quadrupled*.

The rise is partly attributed to increases in the number of people who are overweight – including an increase in obesity – and in a lack of physical activity..



The largest numbers of people with diabetes were estimated for the South East Asia and Western Pacific Regions,

accounting for approximately half the people with diabetes in the world.

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of death in the world. There are 1.6 million deaths directly attributed to diabetes each year. The majority of these deaths happen in low and middle-income countries.



Did you know? If people with diabetes were a country it would have the third largest population on the planet.

Prevention - Saves Lives and Money

When multiple risk factors are tackled the risk of diabetes plummets by 75 per cent. That's the conclusions of a study by a Chinese University Medical College.

Healthy behaviours – such as physical activity, eating a balanced diet, and reducing alcohol intake – are well-established as key to type 2 diabetes prevention, but a new meta-analysis shows just how dramatic the combined effect of adopting all of these behaviours can be, reducing the risk of developing the disease by as much as 75% and substantially reducing poor outcomes among those who have diabetes.

Published in the September issue of *Diabetologia*, Yanbo Zhang of the Tongji Medical College, Huazhong University, is quoted as saying: "Our study is the first systematic review and meta-analysis to summarize the relationship between combined lifestyle factors and incident type 2 diabetes as well as the risk of mortality and incident cardiovascular disease among diabetic individuals."

Given that the proportion of individuals with the healthiest lifestyle was found to be low in most populations, the key according to the researchers in this latest study is "promotion of an overall healthy lifestyle, instead of tackling one particular lifestyle factor," noting that this approach "should be a public health priority for all countries."

Advocacy Action – Do you have a National Diabetes Plan with cross-departmental policies to assist prevention? Are you advocating for such a national plan? Is the need to integrate policies across departments a vital part of a successful prevention strategy?

News From Around the World



New Zealand – New Type 2 prevention campaign launched.
<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/s-hows/2019/07/new-campaign-aims-to-curb-new-zealand-s-type-2-diabetes-problem.html>



[care/](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/10/diabetes-in-india-digital-care/)

How Goa's digital approach to diabetes can improve universal healthcare
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/10/diabetes-in-india-digital-care/>



USA – Type 2 amputations on the rise, a worrying report from the States.

<https://www.inquirer.com/health/amputation-increasing-diabetes-surgery-insulin-20190616.html>

Advocacy Action – what is the trend in your country. Can you ask your Government what the estimated cost of amputations is to your health care system and the economic cost to your country?



Australia – A new drive to alert decision makers of the costs of diabetes to health care system.
<https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/news/15660?type=articles>



<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/anti-diabetic-drug-also-reduces-risk-of-heart-failure-finds-study/articleshow/71071745.cms>

Anti-diabetic drug also reduces risk of heart failure - Indian study
<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/anti-diabetic-drug-also-reduces-risk-of-heart-failure-finds-study/articleshow/71071745.cms>



Refuge seekers trapped on Greek Islands with diabetic and other medicine shortages.

<https://www.msf.org/deliberate-neglect-greek-and-eu-authorities-towards-those-trapped-islands>

Advocacy Action: How are the health needs of migrants met in you country? Can you ask? Can your country do better or could others learn from you? Please let PDGN know.



Some Ideas for World Diabetes Day tried in Parliaments around the world.

- A Children's lobby of Parliament – usually in association with a national diabetes organisation or JDRF if active in your country, where children with diabetes come to meet their elected representatives and tell them about their experience of living with diabetes.
- Testing Day for Parliament – usually in association with a national diabetes organisation or nearby medical centre where Parliamentarians, their staff and staff of the Parliament can be tested for diabetes.
- Exhibition to publicise diabetes – usually in association with a public health body.
- Meeting on diabetes with invited speakers – usually a health minister alongside a medical professional and a patient.
- Sponsored events to raise funds for research, treatments and advocacy, such as walks, runs, and challenges.
- A blue circle (the emblem of diabetes) of people around the Parliament – successfully tried in Portugal around Lisbon City Hall raising the profile of diabetes through the national media as a result.
- Request for an annual report to your Parliament on the state of diabetes in your country.

Advocacy Action: Check with your national diabetes association to see what they are planning and how you can work together for mutual benefit. And do report back with photos for our December newsletter.

Watching Out for Diabetes!

National Health Service (NHS) England is planning to roll-out a device worn on the wrist to thousands of people who are considered to be at risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

It is part of its Diabetes Prevention Programme (DPP), launched in 2016 in partnership with Public Health England (PHE) and the patient group organisation Diabetes UK.

The DPP helps people who are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes by giving them tailored, personalised help including advice on healthy eating, physical exercise and managing weight.

Almost four million people in England have type 2 diabetes and a sixth of hospital beds are occupied by someone with the condition, which leads to more than 9,000 amputations each year.

NHS England said that up to a fifth of the 40,000 places on its DPP per year will now be delivered digitally.

They will receive: wearable technology that monitors levels of exercise with apps which allow users to access health coaches and educational content; online peer support groups with the ability to set and monitor goals electronically.

More information here:

<http://www.onmedica.com/NewsArticle.aspx?id=2623667c-792b-4589-aa4b-db243f64b5b2>

Advocacy Action – Could your country adopt a similar approach? Have you already done so and can you share the results? Other than cost, are there other barriers to the use of new technology?

PDGN News

Can PDGN Help You More?

Would you welcome some extra support from PDGN for your group, or on setting one up? Get in touch with our Secretary General Adrian Sanders – adrian@pdgn.co.uk and find out what we can do.

What's Happening in Your country?

Let us know what's happening in your area? Add PDGN to your press releases, send us a report on your successes and challenges - preferably with photos to share with others. Together we make the greatest difference. It's hard acting on your own but PDGN wants to hear from you. All the successful groups started with just one person. Send your stories and photos to: adrian@pdgn.co.uk

Can You Help Us?

Would you like to get involved with the management of PDGN? Have an informal chat with one of our co-chairs who can let you know what's involved.

Email our co-chairs Sir Michael Hirst, John Bowis OBE and Chris Delicata via info@pdgn.co.uk with your contact details.

Ask your colleagues to join PDGN – It's easy and free if you are an elected representative, just fill in the membership form on the web page www.pdgn.co.uk

Focus on PDGN People – Number One, Co_Chair Chris Delicata

PDGN has three Co-Chairs; Sir Michael Hirst, John Bowis OBE and in this edition we focus on Chris J. Delicata.

Chris Delicata is actively involved in advocating for the Diabetes cause in his home country and internationally.

His eldest son was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in 1999 when he was just one year old. This difficult episode in his life encouraged him to work wholeheartedly for diabetes.

From 2003 until 2015, Chris was actively involved with the International Diabetes Federation serving a four-year term as President of the European Region of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF-Europe) for the period 2008-2012 and Vice President of the International Diabetes Federation for three years during the period 2013 to 2015.

Chris was a founding member of the European Coalition for Diabetes in 2009 and still serves as its Chairman.

In 2019 he was appointed as a trustee of the Alliance for European Diabetes Research (EURADIA).

On a local level, Chris has been actively involved in the Maltese Diabetes Association since 2001 and is currently President of the Association.

In 2011, he was awarded the *CIVI Europaeo Praemium* – European Citizens Prize by the President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek in recognition of his work to further promote the Diabetes cause in Europe. In 2017, he was also honoured by his hometown St. Julians with "Gieh San Giljan" in recognition of his diabetes work.

Chris is married to Michelle and has three children: Jack (21), Adam (19) and Kate (13). He is an Insurance Practitioner by profession and is currently employed as a Senior Manager with one of the leading insurance companies in Malta.



PDGN News



The new President of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes, Professor David Matthews, visited the PDGN stall at the 55th annual meeting of EASD in Barcelona this September.

He met PDGN Co-Chair Sir Michael Hirst and Secretary General Adrian Sanders with EASD Managing Director and Chief Medical Officer Dr Monika Grusser.

Sir Michael Hirst communicated PDGN's grateful thanks for the help and support of EASD, with a stall in the Associations' Village - an exhibition area for patient groups, charities and not for profits.

Technology News

Roche Diabetes Care India launches 'mySugr' App & Accu-Chek Instant to help patients

<https://www.exchange4media.com/marketing-news/roche-diabetes-care-india-launches-mysugr-app-accu-chek-instant-to-help-patients-96482.html>

Dexcom Apple Watch upgrade directly monitors diabetes

<https://www.diabetes.co.uk/news/2019/jun/dexcom-upgrade-directly-monitors-diabetes-via-apple-watch-96330159.html>

Research Corner

Much of the research and studies make for grim reading with the implications for people and health care systems severe.

All the more important to seek allies who can share and add force to your advocacy in order to seek improvements to prevention, encourage early diagnosis, and the best treatments.



Canadian children not being diagnosed early enough -

https://www.eurekalert.org/public_releases/2019-05/muhc-ciq051419.php



Does this explain the link between diabetes and cancer?

https://www.eurekalert.org/public_releases/2019-08/acs-hdc072919.php



Risk for death with diabetes 'exceptionally high' in Asian countries -

<https://www.healio.com/endo/crinology/diabetes/news/online/%7Bb3ab7134-7a61-442b-9a1a-06b50e1cb1d3%7D/risk-for-death-with-diabetes-exceptionally-high-in-asian-countries>



Exposure to common virus may increase risk for type 1 diabetes -

https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2019/05/22/Exposure-to-common-virus-may-increase-risk-for-type-1-diabetes/4121558537936/?ts=16



Link between type 2 diabetes and sleep apnoea -

<https://www.diabetes.co.uk/news/2019/mar/research-investigates-strength-of-factors-in-link-between-type-2-diabetes-and-sleep-apnea-98971272.html>



Our New Focus

Our new focus and Strategic plan has been developed on the basis of an internal and external review of the Parliamentarians for Diabetes Global Network (PDGN) and its activities to date. This included interviews with internal and external PDGN stakeholders and targeted desk research on the current policy and stakeholder environment.

The Context

PDGN is operating in a well-developed and competitive diabetes stakeholder environment with a number of established organisations advocating for improvements in diabetes care. There is a strong belief among internal and external stakeholder groups in the significant value and potential contribution of an organisation like PDGN.

The uniqueness of the organisation is widely referenced by these groups, along with PDGN's potential to offer a more direct and effective approach to diabetes advocacy. There is also great respect for the knowledge and experience

of PDGN's leaders among these key stakeholders.

While PDGN's leadership and support have resulted in some important achievements for diabetes – including developments in



Morocco, Australia, Scotland, Malta and Lebanon – these have not always been fully

recognised or valued among PDGN's key stakeholders.

PDGN recognises that there is a need for change if it is to succeed in its mission to drive improvements in diabetes care. There are opportunities and support for this change both within and outside the organisation with some clear and consistent proposals for improvement coming from PDGN's key stakeholders.

The PDGN strategy for the next three years, therefore, aims to build on these proposals and to provide a clear roadmap to deliver this transformation.

