

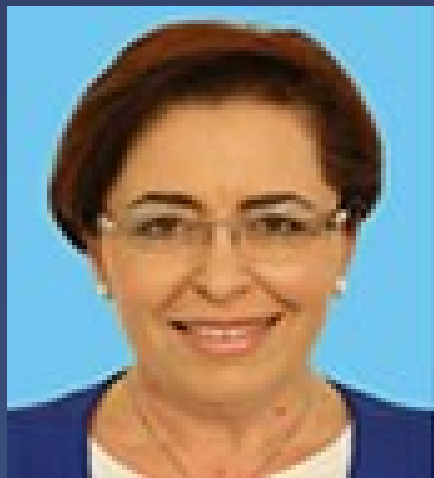
## TO THE NEXT LEVEL

The Maltese Cross-Party Group for Diabetes has taken its status to the next level.

Started by two interested MPs who attended a PDGN Forum six years ago, the Maltese All Party Diabetes Group has had a string of advocacy successes culminating in the adoption of a National Diabetes Plan by the Government.

Now the group has been recognised as a Parliamentary Working Group that the Speaker of the Parliament has agreed will be a sub-committee of the powerful Health Standing Committee.

It means a higher profile, more influence within decision making and records of meetings that will be documented on the parliament's website.



The committee has five members and is chaired by Labour Member Silvio Grixti.

Opposition National Party MP Claudette Buttigieg MP, left, is one of the members and is Deputy Speaker of the House. She has a teenager with Type 1 diabetes..

<https://parlament.mt/en/13th-leg/wg-diabetes/>

### Can We Help You Form A Group?

If you can persuade a few colleagues to join PDGN – it's free and only takes a couple of minutes to fill in a form online at [www.pdgn.co.uk](http://www.pdgn.co.uk) – we can liaise with you to arrange a meeting and put you in touch with someone who can help you get your group off the ground.



The Hon Silvio Grixti MP, Chair of the now Official Parliamentary Working Group for Diabetes.

## Advocacy Brings Results

Across the world great strides are being made increasing awareness of diabetes and its comorbidities with some of the most effective actions being taken where cross-party groups operate. PDGN exists to help form such groups and to support them, as well as to assist the advocacy of elected politicians working alone.

## What Is Advocacy?

Advocacy is an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions. It includes activities and publications to influence public policy, laws and budgets by using facts, their relationships, the media, and messaging to educate officials and the public.





Children in Quebec are not diagnosed early enough with type 1 diabetes

according to a study that reveals a rise in the number of children presenting a life-threatening complication at diagnosis known as Diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA).

DKA is a serious problem that can occur in people with diabetes if their body starts to run out of insulin. This causes harmful substances called ketones to build up in the body, which can be life-threatening if not spotted and treated quickly.

Researchers in Canada looked at the trends of DKA by analysing data provided by the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ), which focused on the diagnosis of type 1 diabetes in patients between the ages of 1 to 17 years, from 2001 to 2014. They identified a total of 5,741 new cases of diabetes among children and adolescents.

The cause in this rise has yet to be established.

**Advocacy Action:** Ask your Health Minister about the trends in DKA in your country, especially among young people. Use your position to highlight that while diabetes can be controlled, and in type 2 sometimes reversed, the challenge is too many people losing their lives from diabetes early and often after expensive complications, many of which could have been avoided with the right policies in place.

[https://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_relations/2019-05/muhc-cia051419.php](https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_relations/2019-05/muhc-cia051419.php)

# PDGN VICE-PRESIDENT JOINS WHO TAC

The Meeting of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the North Africa and Eastern Mediterranean Region EMRO was attended by PDGN Vice-President Mostafa Brahimi MP. It was held in April at the WHO headquarters in Cairo, Egypt, under the chairmanship of the Regional Director of the WHO, Dr Ahmed MANDHARI.

Over two days, members of the EMRO regional office and 14 experts in health policy from Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Australia and Saudi Arabia, discussed various themes related to the 2023 Vision, Strategic Directions and Policy Perspectives of the World Health Organization in the EMRO Region.

At the end of the meeting, several recommendations were made to accompany the 22 EMRO countries for the establishment of their road-map for Universal Medical Coverage; fight against Chronic non-communicable diseases like diabetes, obesity, cancer; communicable diseases; maternal mortality; the system and others. While considering that health is a multifactorial horizontal domain where everyone must take responsibility: the government, parliament, social security, civil society, medical societies and the citizen.



**Members of the WHO North African and Eastern Mediterranean Technical Advisory Committee with PDGN Vice President Dr Mostafa Brahimi MP (standing dead centre in front of the WHO logo)**

**Plan Now for World Diabetes Day, 14 November 2019.**

**Advocacy action:** Plan an event, secure a debate, ask questions in advance and if you can on the day itself and help raise the profile of diabetes world wide.



# Advocacy Action

Are you making use of pharmacists?



Where there is an established network of Community pharmacies, such as in the UK, many peoples' first contact with their health service is with their local chemist. Increasingly health care managers are trying to encourage people to go to their

pharmacy first before seeing a doctor, or visiting a hospital.

Pharmacists are well placed to screen patients for type 2 diabetes, which could increase early diagnosis and significantly reduce health service costs - according to new research from the University of East Anglia and Boots UK.

More than three million people in the UK were diagnosed with diabetes in 2014 and there was an estimated 590,000 people with undiagnosed diabetes.

The estimated cost of type 2 diabetes to the NHS in 2011 was £8.8bn. The cost of diabetes to the NHS is expected to rise from 10 per cent to 17 per cent between then and 2035 - with one third of this being due to complications of the disease.

Early identification and treatment of diabetes is known to reduce the incidence of complications. Screening services increase the number of diabetes diagnoses and results in cases being identified 3.3 years earlier on average.

[https://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2019-03/uoea-t2d032519.php](https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2019-03/uoea-t2d032519.php)

Pharmacists have been identified as important partners in changing the behaviour of people and are also being encouraged to help patients with type 2 diabetes to change their diet in order to reduce their reliance on drugs. There are different professional views on low carbohydrate diets but the potential is there for engaging pharmacists more in achieving improved health care outcomes.

<https://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/news-and-analysis/features/reversing-type-2-diabetes-how-pharmacists-are-helping-patients-to-go-drug-free/20200502.article?firstPass=false>

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## 🇬🇧 Diabetes Week

During the UK's Diabetes Week in June Diabetes UK, arranged for 3 MPs to experience life with diabetes, from finger pricking to carb counting.

The idea could be organised at any time to raise awareness of the issues faced by people with diabetes who make up a large section of every elected representatives' constituency.

**Advocacy Action:** Could you arrange something similar through your national diabetes association? Introducing colleagues to the issue may identify allies for future advocacy and recruits to a cross-party group.

## 🇮🇳 India and South Asia Improved Outcomes

Roche, and Wellthy Diagnostics presented at the recent Scientific Sessions of the American Diabetes Association, in San Francisco, compelling data of improved diabetes care outcomes in a South Asian population when patients followed prescribed plan of medication and lifestyle modification in conjunction with a combination therapy of self-monitoring blood glucose device and a clinically validated digital therapeutic (DTx).

<https://www.expresshealthcare.in/news/roche-and-wellthy-therapeutics-showcase-data-of-improved-diabetes-care-outcomes-in-south-asian-population/412107/>



## News From Australia



### More support for children living with type 1 diabetes

The Australian Government will invest \$6 million to better support children living with diabetes, with the launch of a new program across Australian schools.

The Type 1 Diabetes Management in Schools program will support around 6,000 children living with the condition by providing a training and education program for teachers on the management of children with type 1 diabetes.

It will give parents peace of mind that their children with type 1 diabetes are better

supported in managing their condition while at school.

Teachers and school staff will be trained in insulin administration, recognition of hypoglycaemia and normalising diabetes management in schools.

In 2015, more than 6,000 children aged 0-14 years had type 1 diabetes.

The program will be designed and delivered by Diabetes Australia, through the National Diabetes Services Scheme, supported by an alliance of the key national health professional and consumer diabetes organisations.

This builds on the Coalition Government's \$54 million initiative for free continuous glucose monitoring devices reported on in Issue One 2019.

The National Diabetes Services Scheme is a Commonwealth funded initiative that supports timely, reliable and affordable access to products and services that help people with diabetes effectively self-manage their condition.

**Advocacy Action:** What's the situation in your schools for children with type 1 diabetes? Is there a need for code of practice or change to legislation? Examples of both are available to help you.

### Can PDGN Help You More?

You may already have a group and would welcome some extra support from PDGN. Get in touch with our Secretary General Adrian Sanders – [adrian@pdgn.co.uk](mailto:adrian@pdgn.co.uk) and find out what we can do.

### What's Happening in Your Patch?

Let us know what's happening in your patch?

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 or requests for help and support from others to [adrian@pdgn.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto:info@pdgn.co.uk) with your contact number.

# More News From Around the World



**Morocco** - PDGN Vice-president Mustafa Brahimi MP reports that the Moroccan Diabetes Fighting League is organising the 8th National Symposium on Diabetes and Nutrition, Diabetes Morocco 2019 at Ibn Tofail University in Kenitra, on July 5th and 6th, 2019. The event will be organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the Moroccan Society of Endocrinology Diabetology and Nutrition, the Moroccan Society of Nutrition, Health and Environment, WHO, and several other organisations. The Congress program will focus on Diabetes and Nutrition with Mustafa making a presentation on the successful campaign to introduce a soda tax in Morocco and the prospects for the fight against toxic products sugar, salt and fat.



**New Zealand** - The Pharmaceutical Management Agency, better known as Pharmac, is a New Zealand Government agency that decides, on behalf of District Health Boards, which medicines and pharmaceutical products are subsidised for use in the community and public hospitals.

Pharmac was created in 1993 as a response to the ever-increasing costs of pharmaceuticals. The agency's primary aim is "to secure for eligible people in need of pharmaceuticals, the best health outcomes that are reasonably achievable from pharmaceutical treatment and from within the amount of funding provided.

It is coming under criticism by medical professionals with one Endocrinologist quoted as suggesting New Zealand's type 2 diabetes drugs are 'third world'. This article asks the question why Pharmac won't fund the medicines experts want?

**Advocacy Action:** Are there reasons other than cost for why patients are not getting the treatments and medicines they should in your country? Can you persuade your media to investigate, or call for evidence via your scrutiny system?

<https://embed.radionz.co.nz/news/in-depth/390699/guyon-espiner-investigates-pharmac-nz-diabetes-drugs-third-world-doctor>



**USA** - In a great example of cross the aisle working through an all-party group, US lawmakers Reps. Tom Reed (R-NY) and Diana DeGette (D-CO) the co-chairs of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus, have introduced bipartisan legislation to continue funding a key federal diabetes research program for an additional five years, and increase its annual funding from \$150 million to \$200. The group has effectively increased research funding by \$250 million over the next 5 years.

**Advocacy Action:** Get a cross party group together and make a real difference. PDGN can help you set one up and help it grow.

<https://www.lansingstar.com/news-page/16162-legislation-to-increase-funding-for-diabetes-research-introduced>



**USA action on behalf of South Asian Population** - More cross-party action from the States, this time on behalf of those from a South Asian ethnicity in the country. Working together a Democrat and a Republican have secured a Bill that will fund research and analysis to identify solutions to preventable circumstances in order to save lives. The figures identified in the US may be similar in other countries.

There's already evidence to back up the concerns of Democrat Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) and Republican Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC) reported here:

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

**Advocacy Action:** Has any similar research been undertaken in your country? Can it be used to shape policy in the future? Can you work with others to prompt such research being conducted?

<https://www.americanbazaaronline.com/2019/06/06/jayapal-wilson-re-introduce-south-asian-heart-health-awareness-act-437895/>

# PDGN News

Our Patron the Hon Judi Moylan AO retired as



Diabetes Australia's National President and Chair of the Board at the end of last year although the Board has asked her to stay

on as Government Affairs Adviser for the next 12 months.

She has also been appointed to the National Health & Medical Research Council.

## "Arise Sir George"

Congratulations to PDGN member George, now Sir George Howarth, UK Labour MP for Knowsley, knighted in the Queen's birthday honours for parliamentary and political service.



## Please Ask Your Colleagues to Join

Our membership is our strength and it constantly turns over as people lose elections or stand down - we have to constantly recruit. Please ask your colleagues to join, it's free and there's a membership form on our website.

 [www.pdgn.co.uk](http://www.pdgn.co.uk)

 @PDGN\_diabetes

# 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.



New study by Australian researchers investigates how exposure to certain triggers can increase the risk of type 1 diabetes

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-05-exposure-triggers-diabetes.html>



An update from the Association of British Clinical Diabetologists (ABCD) that aims to mitigate a risk of higher incidence of diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA) without significant

hyperglycaemia and other potential complications in people taking SGLT-2 inhibitors.

<https://diabetestimes.co.uk/sglt-2-inhibitors-position-statement-updated-type-1-diabetes/>



TIANJIN, June 5 (Xinhua) -- Chinese researchers have achieved a breakthrough in developing a new type of hydrogel material for type 1 diabetes mellitus (T1DM)

treatment, according to a research team from Tianjin University.

[http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-06/05/c\\_138118775.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-06/05/c_138118775.htm)



New findings from a Sweden-based population study found similar cardiovascular disease prevalence and risk rates among both type 1 diabetes (T1D) and type 2 diabetes (T2D) patients.

<https://www.mdmag.com/conference-coverage/ada-2019/cardiovascular-event-risks-type-1-2-diabetes>

# Technology News

Three Ways Tech is Arming the Battle Against Diabetes  
<https://innotechtoday.com/diabetes-tech/>

Tech platform chosen by UK NHS to help tackle type 2 diabetes. <https://www.med-technews.com/news/healthtech-firm-s-platform-to-tackle-type-2-diabetes-select/>

Dexcom upgrade available.

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