



# DIABETES DIALOGUE

For parliamentarians in Europe united in tackling diabetes

## JANUARY 2012 EDITION

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Adrian Sanders MP

Thank you to everyone who contributed feedback to the November edition of Diabetes Dialogue. Many of you were involved with events publicising World Diabetes Day 2011, and those in Strasbourg and Berlin are mentioned in this edition. In the UK we have been focusing on diabetes strategy for the future. With our National Service Framework (the UK health service's overall plan to improve diabetes care) expiring in 2013, we need to appraise progress to date and the focus from now on. We will need a robust but flexible strategy to take account of the reforms currently being applied to the health service. We are beginning to see the impact of the financial crisis on diabetes healthcare, particularly in the public sector. It would be very good to share how different jurisdictions have adapted to the new conditions.

I look forward to hearing from you.

**Adrian Sanders MP**  
(Chair, UK Parliament All Party Parliamentary Group for Diabetes)

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## Danish presidency priorities confirmed



DANISH PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION 2012

*Smart Health – Better Lives*, a theme underpinning Denmark's EU presidency over the first six months of 2012, gives high priority to the prevention and treatment of diabetes, aiming to drive the need to tackle the diabetes epidemic up the EU agenda. Denmark's challenge is to push for real developments despite the reductions in healthcare budgets in many EU countries. As part of the *Smart Health – Better Lives* agenda, the Danish presidency will focus on strengthening prevention, detection and treatment of chronic diseases using diabetes as a model disease, and will explore ways of applying new structures

for integrated care that could reduce the costs of lifelong treatment.

The latest research from the London School of Economics shows the huge economic impact of diabetes in countries such as Germany, France, Italy, Spain and the UK. In its programme of action for the presidency, Denmark recognises the increasing strain on healthcare systems throughout Europe caused by chronic disease, with more Europeans living longer with one or more chronic disease.

▶ <http://eu2012.dk/en>

## My hopes for the Danish presidency

Diabetes is serious. It kills some 325,000 EU citizens a year and many more suffer disabling conditions such as cardiovascular disease and loss of limbs. There is so much more that can be done in both prevention and treatment. That is why I am excited that, in the current Danish presidency of the EU, action on diabetes is a priority. Many people still see diabetes as a 'mild' kind of disease, but the reality is very different. Diabetes needs attention many times a day.

Unfortunately this is everyday life for more than 32 million EU citizens, most of them living with type 2 diabetes, which is strongly associated with obesity. Being diagnosed with type 1 or type 2 diabetes changes your life. The disturbing fact is that the number of Europeans with chronic diseases – including diabetes – is increasing rapidly. The Danish presidency's decision to raise awareness of diabetes is an important step forward in tackling the disease. It will encourage EU citizens to act on the risk factors for diabetes and inspire member states to instigate prevention and treatment initiatives. I will follow with great interest the Danish presidency's progress on highlighting this critical issue.



By Christel Schaldemose MEP, co-chair of the EU Diabetes Working Group

## Creating parliamentary champions for diabetes

Diabetes Dialogue is an excellent initiative and I congratulate Adrian Sanders MP and his colleagues for facilitating the exchange of ideas and information among parliamentarians. How welcome is the progress made since the late 1980s when as a Member of the UK Parliament I found few fellow Members or Peers willing to admit to their own or their family's diabetes!

The International Diabetes Federation hosted the World Diabetes Congress in December in Dubai and it was a pleasure to see two prominent parliamentarians there – Keith Vaz from the UK and former Senator Guy Barnett from Australia. Both made excellent contributions to the Global Diabetes Forum, which brought together major diabetes stakeholders to discuss future policy.

The next Congress takes place in Melbourne in December 2013, with Anne Felton, vice-president of IDF, chairing the Organising Committee. She and I are very much committed to developing a meeting of global parliamentary champions for diabetes, bringing together parliamentarians from as many countries as possible to discuss how they can work together more effectively on global campaigns to improve the lives of those with diabetes.

Last September the UN hosted a High-level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases, and programmes for action were agreed. Member States have to be held accountable for the undertakings they gave to participate in such programmes. One of the most effective ways of achieving this is to develop a network of parliamentary champions who, through concerted action, can help to move the global diabetes agenda forward.



By Sir Michael Hirst,  
president-elect,  
International Diabetes  
Federation

▶ [www.idf.org](http://www.idf.org)

## Financial crisis offers opportunity to rethink chronic disease management

Tackling chronic diseases with diabetes as a model disease can play a key role in reducing economic burdens and promoting financial recovery. This is one of the themes that will be addressed during the European Diabetes Leadership Forum being held in Copenhagen on 25–26 April 2012. The Forum will take place under the auspices of the Danish presidency of the European Union. The Forum is hosted by the OECD and the Danish Diabetes Association and is supported by Novo Nordisk.

Up to 700 delegates are expected to attend the Forum with the aim of creating a lasting impact

that encourages a meaningful change for long-term solutions in diabetes care, from prevention, to early detection and good management. To ensure political momentum, the Forum also aims to inspire coming presidencies in their efforts to address chronic diseases with diabetes as a model. The Forum aims to attract key stakeholders from many different sectors, including health ministers, politicians, government officials, patient organisations, and health economists.



TODAY, WE CAN CHANGE TOMORROW  
EUROPEAN DIABETES LEADERSHIP FORUM  
COPENHAGEN 2012

▶ For more information, or to register to attend the European Diabetes Leadership Forum, please contact Neil Causey at [necy@novonordisk.com](mailto:necy@novonordisk.com).

▶ [www.DiabetesLeadershipForum.eu](http://www.DiabetesLeadershipForum.eu)

## Diabetes Question Time sparks strong debate

This January, a panel of UK politicians and experts concerned with diabetes took questions from an invited audience at Central Hall, Westminster. Hosted by C3 Collaborating for Health, Diabetes UK and SilverStar, the event was funded by Novo Nordisk UK. Panellists included leading UK MPs Stephen Dorrell, Keith Vaz and Adrian Sanders. Also on the panel were Baroness Young, chief executive of Diabetes UK, and Viggo Birch, vice-president of Novo Nordisk Europe (UK and Ireland). The audience, which was composed of health professionals and policy makers, included

people with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes. Asked what should be the UK health service's top priorities for tackling diabetes, those with diabetes said their priority was supporting self-management (40%). For those without diabetes the priority was seen to be the need for better identification and prevention (43%). Averaged across the audience as a whole, the top priority remained identification and prevention with 37.5% of the vote.

▶ <http://tinyurl.com/diabetesQT>

## World Diabetes Day in action

**Strasbourg:** The latest edition of *Diabetes: Policy Puzzle* was launched by MEP Christel Schaldemose at the EU Parliament in November. The *Policy Puzzle* maps out diabetes-related policies and services across the entire European region, covering 47 countries. Present at the launch were youth leaders from several EU countries, who emphasised to EU Commissioners how young people with diabetes can live full and successful lives when given the right level of support. Young people living with diabetes exhibited artwork highlighting the importance of prevention, treatment and management of the disease.

▶ <http://tinyurl.com/policypuzzle>

**Berlin:** The German Centre for Diabetes Research held an interactive exhibition using a hall of distorting mirrors to emphasise the strong links between obesity and diabetes. Visitors could also take a diabetes risk test to see how likely they were to be affected by chronic disease. Local celebrities with diabetes explained how they get on with day-to-day life, and audiovisual presentations showed the latest detection and treatment methods. 270,000 new cases of type 2 diabetes are diagnosed each year in Germany.

▶ <http://tinyurl.com/GermanCDR>

## Key events

- ▶ Election of the President of the European Parliament, Belgium, 17 January  
<http://tinyurl.com/presidentEU>
- ▶ Opening conference, 2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity Between Generations, Denmark, 18–19 January  
[www.aktivaldring2012.dk](http://www.aktivaldring2012.dk)  
<http://tinyurl.com/ageing-solidarity>
- ▶ Competitiveness and Innovation framework Programme (second call for the implementation of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing), 1 February  
<http://ec.europa.eu/cip/>
- ▶ Up Close and Personalized: International Congress on Personalized Medicine, Italy, 2–5 February <http://www.upcp.org/>
- ▶ Senior Level Working Party on Health, Belgium, 8 February  
<http://tinyurl.com/seniorlevelPH>
- ▶ Diabetesity: A World-Wide Challenge, Belgium, 9–10 February  
<http://tinyurl.com/diabetesity2012>
- ▶ Forum of the Committee of the Regions, Belgium, 14 February  
<http://tinyurl.com/committeeoftheregions>