



## Diabetes is a global pandemic

The diabetes global pandemic is now accelerating through the developing world with four out of every five people diagnosed from these countries.

In Africa diabetes has increased at alarming rates from 2.5 million in 2000 to 14.2 million in 2015 and 34 million estimated in 2040. In the Middle East and North Africa region diabetes has increased from 17 million in 2002 35 million in 2015 and an estimated 72 million in 2040. India now has 52 million people with diabetes and China more than 100 million.

Western lifestyles have gone global with the 'oversize me' mentality for eating and the high sugar fat and salt diets, as well as sedentary living, non - active transport, an Internet Google and mobile devices dominated world leading to inactivity. Unfortunately, the developing world has taken on much of our western lifestyles. In short we need to live more healthy lives. Energy in should balance energy out with a balanced healthy diet with reduced sugar salt and fat in our diets together with more physical activity.

The consequences are serious with 5 million deaths last year from diabetes around the world - more than double the deaths from HIV tuberculosis and malaria combined. The bulk of these are in the developing world.

Diabetes kills a person every six seconds, and someone loses a limb every 20 seconds because of diabetes. The pandemic is getting worse not better with one new case every three seconds and nearly half of all adults with diabetes being undiagnosed. These people are certain to face serious health complications and/or an early death.

Type 2 diabetes used to be restricted to our older population, but it is now affecting more people middle-aged or younger still. The disease is not just causing a blow out in the health budget but is consequently reducing productivity and negatively impacting on the economy.

Genetics also is a key driver of the disease. Indigenous populations around the world are at much higher risk of diabetes with the Australian indigenous population between two times and six times more likely to have diabetes. Our Pacific island populations have amongst the highest rates of type 2 diabetes in the world.

Sadly more than 40 countries do not even provide funding support for basic medicines such as insulin for people with diabetes including Type 1 diabetes who require insulin to survive. This is a tragedy but thanks to the charity 'Life for a child' funds are raised and insulin is distributed to some of those in need. The others who cannot access insulin face certain death within a year or so.

The objective of the Parliamentary Diabetes Global Network is to provide support for people with diabetes their families and those at risk around the globe. We advocate for



universal access to health care and basic medicine such as insulin for all people with diabetes.

Our network through our 'Vancouver Proclamation' supports the World Health Assembly commitment to halt the rise in diabetes and obesity by 2025. It was very encouraging to see the great progress Morocco is making and plans it has to address the diabetes epidemic in the North Africa region. It is also encouraging that Australia has a national diabetes strategy.

Every country should treat diabetes as a priority to improve prevention diagnosis and treatment of people with diabetes and to promote healthy lifestyles to prevent Type 2 diabetes and the obesity epidemic.

### **Global Diabetes Facts**

In 2015 -415 million adults living with diabetes and by 2035 this is estimated to increase to 600 million.

In 2015 a further 316 million adults have impaired glucose tolerance or at high risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and by 2035 this is set to increase to 471 million.

- 5 million deaths per year- one person every 6 seconds
- one new person with diabetes every 3 seconds
- one limb lost every 20 seconds
- nearly half the people with type 2 diabetes do not know they have it
- four out of every five new cases of diabetes are from the developing world

- **Guy Barnett is the Liberal Member for Lyons and as President of the Parliamentary for Diabetes Global Network and he was guest speaker at the National Symposium on diabetes and nutrition in Morocco on May 13-14, 2016.**