



Hon. Patty Hajdu
Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

December 5, 2019

Dear Minister:

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Health. We are writing to urge you to implement a comprehensive nation-wide diabetes strategy based on the Diabetes 360° framework. We are a group of stakeholders concerned about diabetes and are resolved that it is time Canada took robust action to address the diabetes epidemic.

We are ready to work with you to implement Diabetes 360° and enable Canada to reach the following goals:

- **90 per cent** of Canadians living in a food secure, walkable environment that lowers their chances of developing type 2 diabetes or its complications - including heart disease, stroke, blindness, amputation, and kidney failure
- **90 per cent** of Canadians know if they are at risk of diabetes - or if they already have it
- **90 per cent** of Canadians are acting to prevent diabetes and its complications
- **90 per cent** of Canadians with diabetes are achieving improved health outcomes

90 + 90 + 90 + 90 = Diabetes 360°

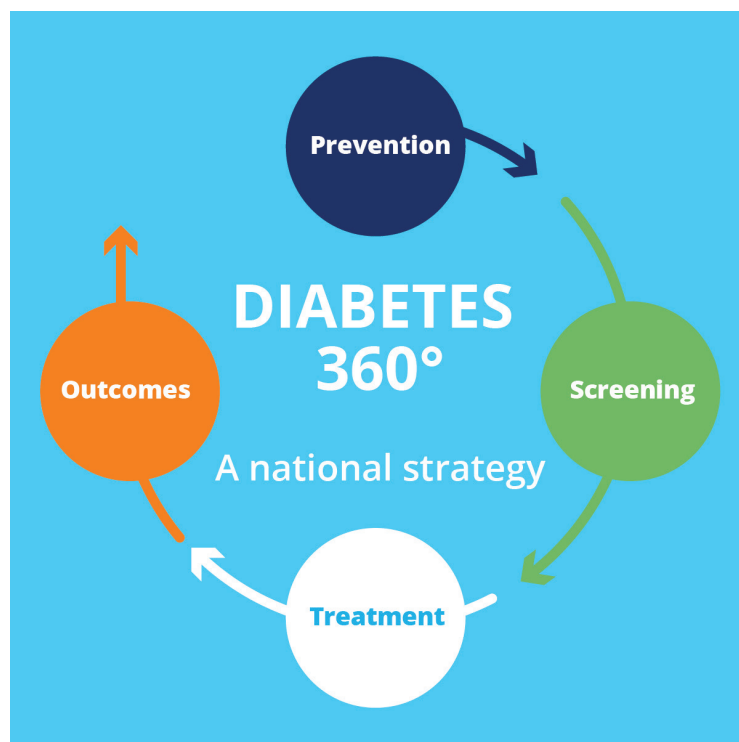
Why 360°?

A circle is 360 degrees, the path to complete a journey. Circles have particular symbolic importance for Indigenous Canadians, who are disproportionately impacted by the burden of diabetes in Canada. Our circle includes patients, their families, and their health care providers. It includes Band Councils and Provincial Ministries of Health, It includes researchers committed to finding ways to treat and prevent diabetes and its complications. It includes Diabetes Canada and the Lawson Foundation. It is time for the Ministry of Health to join our Diabetes 360 circle.

Diabetes is one of the most significant public health challenges of our time. In Canada today, more than 11 million people, or one-third of the population, live with prediabetes or diabetes. Every 3 minutes in our country someone new is diagnosed with this progressive, chronic disease. Type 2 diabetes, which is caused by many factors including socioeconomic status and ethnicity, is the most common type of diabetes. Type 1 diabetes, which 5-10 per cent of those with diabetes have, is an autoimmune disorder which is not preventable.

Diabetes is a disease that affects people of every age and represents a growing burden for children and youth and their families. The incidence of type 1 diabetes, too, is increasing faster in Canada than in most other developed countries (effectively doubling every 20 years). While children are most often affected by type 1 diabetes, increasing number are being diagnosed with type 2. Young adults now 20 years old face a 50 per cent chance of developing diabetes in their lifetime; for First Nations, that risk is up to 80 per cent.

The impact on individuals, families, and our healthcare system is crippling. Diabetes reduces quality and length of life, and contributes to 30 per cent of strokes, 40 per cent of heart attacks, 50 per cent of kidney failure requiring dialysis, and 70 per cent of non-traumatic limb amputations. It is a leading cause of vision loss in working age (aged 20-65). People with diabetes also are at greater risk of depression and other mental health challenges, and people living with serious mental illnesses are at greater risk of developing diabetes. There are thousands of preventable diabetes-related hospitalizations in Canada each year. Treating the disease will cost our health-care system a staggering \$29 billion this year alone.





Simply put, it is a disease that Canada cannot afford to ignore. We need to act decisively to stem the tide of diabetes – and the time to act is now.

To quote a young man who lives with type 1 diabetes in New Brunswick,

“ Diabetes and all its complications needs immediate and direct attention. We are experiencing a diabetes epidemic — our communities are unhealthy, our spending is inefficient, and diabetes is rising. With a coordinated effort to rein in these inefficiencies and create more impactful health approaches, we can make meaningful and lasting improvements to our collective physical and mental well-being. ”

When implemented, the Diabetes 360° Strategy will promote sharing of knowledge, data and best practices; and measure impact on patient outcomes to ensure accountability and monitor the strategy's effectiveness. It will ensure that those with type 1 and type 2 diabetes have full access to the care, medications, devices and supplies they need to live well with the disease while we search for a cure. It will ensure that the knowledge being generated through the research supported by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research and the SPOR network (Diabetes Action Canada) is integrated into policy and practice. It also provides a framework for the creation of Indigenous-specific strategic approaches to diabetes prevention and management in Indigenous communities, led and owned by Indigenous people across the country.

The result: fewer cases of type 2 diabetes, lower rates of diabetes-related complications, fewer hospitalizations, and significant savings in health-care costs. As an added benefit, the burden of ALL chronic diseases in Canada will be reduced by this plan.

In recognition of these benefits, in the last session of Parliament, both the Finance and the Health Committees recommended the implementation of Diabetes 360, and we are in agreement that the time to do so is now. In 2021, the world will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the discovery in Canada of insulin, which has saved millions of lives and given Canada it's first Nobel prize in medicine. With this important milestone just around the corner and given the growing burden of this public health crisis -- and the unsustainable pressure on our health-care system -- we really cannot afford not to act.

Diabetes Canada will follow up with your office to request time to meet with you to launch our discussion and partnership. We look forward to moving forward with you.

Canadian Cancer Society

Andrea Seale, Chief Executive Officer

Canadian Indigenous Nurses Association

Marilee Nowgesic, Chief Executive Officer

Canadian Medical Association

Dr. Sandy Buchman, President

Canadian Nurses Association

Claire Betker, President

Canadian Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism

Dr. Heather Lochnan, President; Head, Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism, The Ottawa Hospital. Professor of Medicine, University of Ottawa

Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario

Alex Munter, President & CEO

Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada (CDPAC)

Elizabeth Holmes, Chair

Community Food Centres of Canada

Nick Saul, President & CEO

Connected in Motion

Jen Hanson, Executive Director

**Dalla Lana School of Public Health,
University of Toronto**

Dr. Ananya Banerjee, Assistant Professor & Interim Program Director

Diabète Québec

Sylvie Lauzon, CEO

Diabetes Action Canada

Dr. Catharine Whiteside, Executive Director

Diabetes Canada

Dr. Jan Hux, President and CEO

Heart and Stroke

Yves Savoie, CEO

Hill + Knowlton Canada

Michelle McLean, Senior Vice-President, Health

Insulet Canada Corporation

Beth Whaley, Head of Marketing and Market Access

JDRF Canada

Dave Prowten, President and CEO

The Kidney Foundation of Canada

Elizabeth Myles, National Executive Director

The Lawson Foundation

Marcel Lauziere, President and CEO

LifeScan Canada

Joan Canavan, Market Access Director, Government Affairs

Life Sciences Ontario

Jason Field, President and CEO

**Lilly Canada**

Stephanie Shelley, Diabetes Business Unit Leader

LMC Healthcare

Mark Angelo, CEO

The Lung Association of Canada

Terry Dean, President & CEO

Merck Canada Inc.

Jennifer Chan, Vice-President, Policy and External Affairs

McGill University

Dr. Kaberi Dasgupta, Professor of Medicine, Physician - McGill University Health Centre (MUHC), Director & Senior Scientist - Centre for Outcomes Research and Evaluation (CORE), Research Institute of the MUHC

Medtech Canada

Brian Lewis, President & CEO

Medtronic Canada ULC

Neil Fraser, President

Mount Sinai Hospital

Dr. Harpreet Bajaj, Research Associate, Mount Sinai Hospital and Vice-Chair, Diabetes Canada Clinical Practice Guidelines

Patient Advocates

Judi Ferne
Charlene Lavergne
Shane Nercessian
Dustin Thorsten
Nancy Tout

Pedorthic Association of Canada

Jonathan Strauss, Chief Executive Officer

NexJ Health

Noah Wayne, Director, Clinical Programs

Novo Nordisk Canada Inc.

Béatrice Clerc, President

Ontario Medical Association

Sohail Gandhi, President

Sanofi Canada

Michael Mullette, CEO

Simon Fraser University

Dr. Diane Finegood, Professor and Fellow

The Conference Board of Canada

Monika Slovynec-D'Angelo, Director, Health

University of British Columbia

Kendall Ho, Professor, Emergency Medicine and Lead, Digital Emergency Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Attending Physician, Vancouver General Hospital Department of Emergency Medicine

University of Calgary

Dr. Sonia Butalia, Assistant Professor, Endocrinology and Metabolism, Departments of Medicine and Community Health Sciences, Cumming School of Medicine