

DIABETES 360° AND YOU



The new national strategy is designed to improve the lives of those living with or affected by diabetes now and in the future

By Laura Tennant

Currently, 11 million Canadians are living with diabetes or prediabetes. Diagnosis rates and costs are rising at a rate of about 40 per cent per decade, and are showing no signs of slowing down. Experts believe the health-care costs of diabetes in Canada will continue to rise unless changes are made at the government level. “What we’re doing now is not working,” says Kimberley Hanson, director of federal affairs for Diabetes Canada. So Diabetes Canada worked with various groups and individuals to develop the Diabetes 360° strategy to address the epidemic. *Diabetes Dialogue* spoke with Hanson, who is leading this project.

Can you explain the strategy?

Diabetes 360° is a coordinated strategy to address the diabetes epidemic with measurable goals. The four major targets are to improve prevention, screening, treatment, and patient outcomes related to diabetes.

The strategy has been developed based on the public health model used to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic and is supported by research.

By ensuring that the environment we all live in does not promote the development of type 2 diabetes and by conducting research into the causes of type 1 diabetes, we can prevent millions of Canadians from receiving a diagnosis of diabetes in the next 10 years.

By enhancing the screening for and treatment of diabetes, we can ensure that everyone living with prediabetes or diabetes is getting the best care possible to prevent the development of debilitating complications. All this will combine to improve patient health outcomes, ensuring those with diabetes live healthier lives.

What impact could this strategy have on the lives of Canadians?

We know that if we can make a [proven] prevention program available to more Canadians, we can prevent 60 per cent of people with prediabetes from developing type 2 diabetes in the next 10 years.

In addition to diabetes prevention, it’s about improving screenings so that more people know when they are at risk for diabetes or already living with it. We estimate that there are a million people in Canada who have diabetes and don’t

know it, which puts them at risk of complications. Right now, diabetes is the leading cause of heart disease, stroke, blindness, amputation, and kidney failure. We want to see all of those complications reduced.

It is also about improving treatments and community-based supports, so people can access both more easily.

We’ll also fund research into cures for type 1 diabetes and type 2 diabetes.

Everything that we implement as part of this strategy will be measured and assessed in terms of its impact on the health and well-being of patients.



Kimberley Hanson

How can the average Canadian get involved in Diabetes 360°?

We encourage anyone for whom this is meaningful or relevant to use their voice and speak up. The more people we have calling for this strategy, the more likely we are to be heard by policy-makers.

We launched an online advocacy campaign in the fall. People can visit [our website](#) to learn more and to write a letter to their member of Parliament [MP] [see “Did You Know?” for details], and can also follow us on social media, including [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

You can take action against the diabetes epidemic in Canada by contacting your MP with this easy-to-complete e-form to pledge support for the **Diabetes 360° strategy**. Urge the federal government to fund this strategy in its 2019 budget, before the burden of diabetes gets worse—for Canadians, the health-care system, and the economy.

How can you help us fund research, projects, and campaigns that change lives? Donate now! diabetes.ca/donate

To learn more about Diabetes 360° from volunteers who worked on the project, watch [Why Canada needs a new diabetes strategy now](#).