



Government urged to invest in GP diabetes education

60 per cent of Australians with type 2 diabetes not meeting blood sugar level targets^{1,2}

SYDNEY, 19 May 2015 – Sanofi, the number one diabetes healthcare company in Australia³, is today calling on the Federal Government to join them in funding a GP diabetes education program, aimed at reducing a growing financial burden on the Australian healthcare system.

The education program, developed jointly with endocrinologists, GPs, diabetes educators, pharmacists and Sanofi outlines how, by bringing blood sugar levels to target, GPs can play a key role in cutting future costs on healthcare by reducing the likelihood and severity of diabetes-related complications.

“Diabetes is the fastest growing, chronic condition in Australia; with 1.1 million Australians currently diagnosed⁴,” says Dr Gary Deed, General Practitioner.

“By 2017, it is expected to be the leading contributor to the overall disease burden of disease in Australia. However, early diagnosis, treatment and effective ongoing management will go a long way in reducing the serious, and sometimes life-threatening, consequences of uncontrolled blood sugar levels,” Dr Deed explains.

If left undiagnosed or poorly controlled, diabetes and persistent high blood sugar levels can lead to a range of long-term complications including coronary heart disease, stroke, nerve disease, kidney failure, limb amputations and blindness.⁵

“A key factor in uncontrolled blood sugar levels is the reluctance of GPs to progress treatment quickly in their type 2 diabetes patients, particularly in prescribing insulin”, Dr Deed explains. “This results in patients failing to move to a more appropriate treatment in a timely manner, despite guidelines supporting the need to.”

To address this treatment gap, Sanofi engaged with endocrinologists, GPs, diabetes educators and pharmacists to develop an RACGP accredited, peer-to-peer training program for GPs. Named the *Insulin Leadership Summit* (ILS), the aim of the program is to ensure GPs understand the importance of timely insulin initiation in their patients with type 2 diabetes and to increase their confidence in all aspects of insulin management.⁶

The ILS program is delivered by GPs and editorially independent. It has been in operation for six years with more than 1,300 GPs having participated in the program, primarily in metropolitan areas around Australia. The response has been very positive, with 92 per cent of attendees saying that the program helped them to overcome barriers they had to initiating insulin therapy and to better apply current type 2 diabetes management guidelines.⁶

“While the program has been successful in increasing GP confidence to initiate insulin therapy in type 2 diabetes, there are some clear limitations to its scope and reach,” Dr Deed continues.

“With a finite number of diabetes clinics and specialists around Australia, GPs will increasingly need to take a key role in initiating and managing patients with type 2 diabetes on insulin. This is especially the case in regional and rural areas, where access to these services and access to this training program are limited.”

In order to deliver this program to those areas where it’s most needed, and to ensure robust monitoring and evaluation of outcomes, Sanofi is seeking funding from the Government as part of its commitment to develop a new National Diabetes Strategy.⁷

“GP education and training is key to diabetes care and management in Australia. I urge the Government to support the success of the ILS program to ensure patients with type 2 diabetes in rural and regional areas are not left vulnerable and forced to put further strain on our health system,” Dr Deed concluded.

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About the National Diabetes Strategy

The Government has committed to developing a new National Diabetes Strategy to prioritise the national response to diabetes and identify appropriate approaches to addressing the impact of diabetes in the community. On 2 December 2013, then Minister for Health and Minister for Sport, the Hon Peter Dutton MP announced the establishment of an Advisory Group to provide advice on all aspects of the National Diabetes Strategy development process. The Advisory Group is co-chaired by the Hon Judi Moylan and Professor Paul Zimmet AO. The Advisory Group provides expert policy advice to Government to develop a national response to diabetes across prevention and primary health care, support for patients with complex health conditions and the growing burden of chronic disease on our health system. On 15 April 2015, the Advisory Group called for public comment to further inform the development of the Australian National Diabetes Strategy. The deadline for public submissions is 11.59pm on 17 May 2015.

Diabetes in Australia

- A further 2 million Australians have pre-diabetes and are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes.⁸
- The average annual cost per person with type 2 diabetes is \$4,025-\$9,645 depending on the severity of complications.⁹
- The total annual cost for Australians with type 2 diabetes is estimated at \$6 billion.⁹

About the Insulin Leadership Summit (ILS)

An education provider, Vivacity Health, was appointed to work with a faculty of GPs with diabetes expertise, Credentialed Diabetes Nurse Educators (DNEs), and an endocrinologist to identify the key learning issues for GPs around insulin and the most appropriate adult learning techniques for addressing them. The meeting program was brainstormed and the finer detail worked out in a 2-day train-the-trainer workshop which included presentations from the endocrinologist on some key educational concepts. After the meeting, the concepts developed were further distilled, refined and formulated and turned into a 9.5 hour education program. To achieve the program's aims, while also being in line with the RACGP's curriculum for general practice, it was decided that the educational meetings should be: a) about peer-to-peer education – GPs training GPs; b) multidisciplinary; c) procedural focussed, reinforcing a simple step-by-step and practical approach to insulin initiation and up-titration that was in-line with guidelines and could be replicated in the surgery; d) highly interactive, utilising audience response systems (ARS) and small group discussions, with ample opportunities for Q&A.

About Sanofi

Sanofi, a global healthcare leader, discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi has core strengths in the field of healthcare with seven growth platforms: diabetes solutions, human vaccines, innovative drugs, consumer healthcare, emerging markets, animal health and the new Genzyme. Sanofi is listed in Paris (EURONEXT: SAN) and in New York (NYSE: SNY). To learn more about Sanofi, please visit us at www.sanofi.com

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