



MANITOBA
2019 Election

Let's Make Diabetes a Priority

About Diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic disease in which the body has difficulty regulating the amount of sugar in the blood. Elevated levels of blood sugar thicken the blood like syrup and over time can lead to organ, blood vessel and nerve damage or failure.

Diabetes-related complications can be debilitating and even life-threatening, and in turn place tremendous pressure on our health-care system. Treating the complications of diabetes, including heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and amputation is estimated to be 80 per cent of the provincial cost of diabetes in our province.



Health policy in every province should include type 2 diabetes prevention and diabetes management so that those who are living with the disease have access to the medication, supplies, devices and support they need to live healthy lives and delay or avoid the complications.

People with diabetes are:

25 times more

likely to experience
vision loss



12 times more

likely to be hospitalized for
kidney failure needing dialysis



3 times more

likely to be
hospitalized for heart
attack, stroke and heart failure



20 times more

likely to be hospitalized
for non-traumatic toe,
foot and leg amputations



Vision



- Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in Canadians under 50
- 500,000 Canadians have diabetes-related eye damage that can lead to blindness

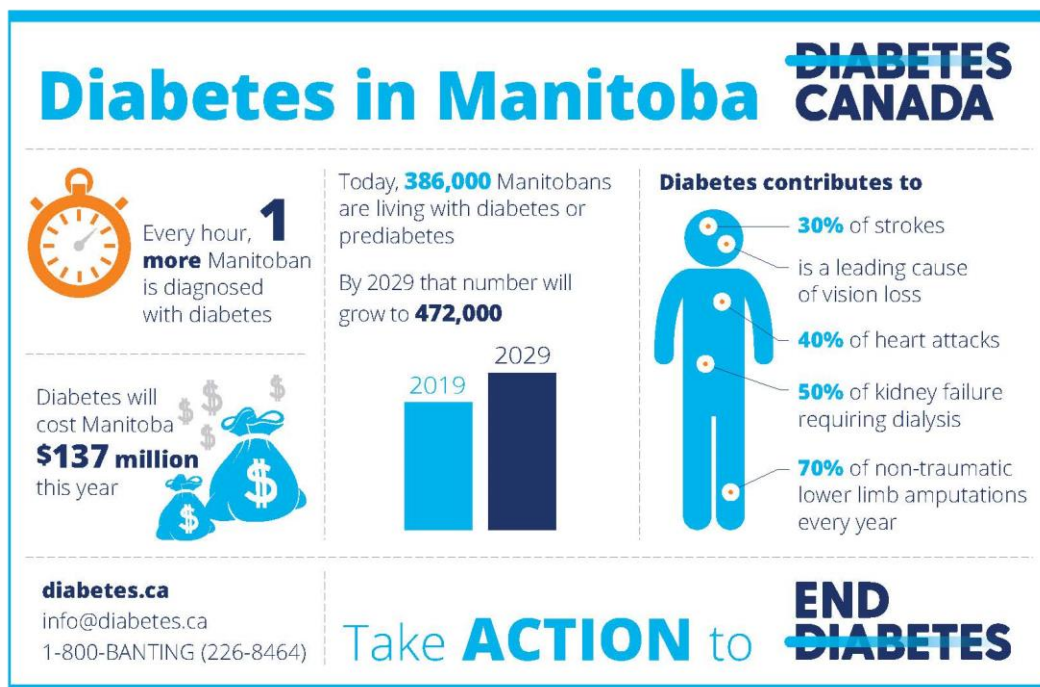
**Diabetes
reduces lifespan
by 5 to 15 years**

Diabetes in Manitoba

In 2019 approximately 136,000 people live with diabetes in Manitoba, representing 10 per cent of the province's population. Over the next decade, this province is projected to experience a 36 per cent increase in diabetes prevalence.

While diabetes prevalence is high, this does not represent the full burden of the disease. About one-third of people with diabetes are undiagnosed and therefore not being treated, and many more are estimated to have prediabetes, a precursor to type 2 diabetes. In 2019, with diabetes, undiagnosed diabetes and prediabetes combined, an estimated 386,000 people in Manitoba (27 per cent of the provincial population) are affected. By 2029, it will increase to 31 per cent. ***This will mean one in three people will be living with diabetes or prediabetes in this province.***

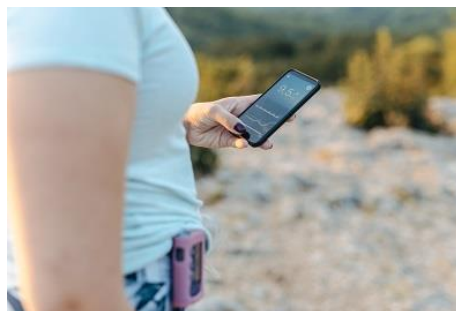
We estimate that diabetes is currently costing the provincial health-care system **\$137 million** in direct health-care costs and will rise to **\$185 million** by 2029. It is important to note that 80 per cent of this cost is attributed to treating the serious complications of the disease.



Issues and Recommendations for Provincial Action

Issue 1: The age restriction on the provincial insulin pump program precludes medically eligible Manitobans with type 1 diabetes over the age of 17 from benefiting from a device that could improve their daily lives and help them to avoid or postpone the serious complications of diabetes.

In April 2012, Diabetes Canada applauded the Manitoba government for introducing a pediatric insulin pump program for medically eligible children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes. The program covers the cost of insulin pumps with pump supplies available through Manitoba Pharmacare.



So, Manitobans over age 17 who are medically eligible with no private insurance must pay \$6,000 - \$7,000 out-of-pocket for an insulin pump or go without. This includes the children and adolescents who aged out of the paediatric program. It's time for Manitoba to expand the program to include adults who would benefit from an insulin pump because type 1 diabetes does not stop at age 18 and the financial burden of managing the disease does not change.

Currently, an estimated 6,800-13,600 Manitobans live with type 1 diabetes. Many inject insulin by needle and syringe several times a day, while others use an insulin pump to deliver a precise amount of insulin throughout the day. There is evidence that shows medical benefits of insulin pumps in place of multiple daily injections for some people with type 1 diabetes. Like diabetes therapies in general, the use of insulin pumps should take into consideration an individual's needs and circumstances. When used appropriately, insulin pump therapy can help individuals achieve target blood sugar levels which is critical to avoid or postpone potentially debilitating and life-threatening complications.

Type 1 diabetes is a life-long disease, and people who are considered good candidates by health-care professionals for insulin pump therapy should have access to this option, regardless of age.

Currently British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, the three Territories fund insulin pumps and supplies for eligible individuals without age restrictions. Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia fund pumps until the age of 25, and Manitoba along with PEI and Quebec maintain paediatric coverage.

Recommended Action 1:

The Government of Manitoba eliminate the age restriction on the existing insulin pump program.

Issue 2: Every 32 hours in Manitoba, someone has a lower limb amputation due to a diabetic foot ulcer. Up to 85 per cent of these amputations may be prevented if foot ulcers are properly treated.

Foot complications are a major cause of morbidity and mortality in people with diabetes. Diabetes is the leading cause of non-traumatic lower limb amputations. Diabetes-related foot wounds contributed to about one-third of all amputations performed in hospitals across Canada in 2011-12. The five-year mortality rate for people with a diabetic foot ulcer is higher than some forms of cancer.

Effective treatment of foot ulcers may be associated with significant savings to the health-care system. When a diabetic foot ulcer heals properly, an individual spends approximately five days in the hospital, ER or clinics verses **86 days** for a lower limb amputation. Effective treatment of a diabetic foot ulcer with a specialized (off-loading) device such as a total contact cast, custom brace and ankle and foot orthoses can allow wounds to heal faster and reduce the number of costly amputations in Manitoba.



Provincial funding of off-loading devices would significantly increase their use by Manitobans with a diabetic foot ulcer and not only improve their health outcomes, but significantly reduce the costs to the health-care system from the avoided health services. According to Diabetes Canada's [report](#), the estimated net savings to the Manitoba government would be \$ 7-\$9 million a year, beginning the first year of device coverage.

Recommended Action 2:

The Government of Manitoba fund specialized (off-loading) devices that treat diabetic foot ulcers and reduce both the human and economic burden of amputations in Manitoba.

Issue 3: The World Health Organization recommends that every country implement a national diabetes strategy yet, despite higher prevalence and per capita costs of diabetes than most of the world's developed nations, Canada has been without one since 2013.

With an aging population and exploding growth rates amongst at-risk populations – most notably Indigenous Canadians – Canada's diabetes burden will continue its rise over the next decade. Both prevalence and direct costs for treating the disease in Canada have been rising at a rate of 4 per cent and 10 per cent respectively per year and show no signs of slowing down. Treating diabetes costs Canada's health care system \$28 billion per year and will approach \$40 billion per year by 2028 unless we act with a sense of urgency.

Canada needs a strategy to coordinate the efforts underway in all provinces and territories to combat this epidemic, one which would bring Canada in line with global best practice,

reduce the human burden of this disease significantly in a very short period and achieve savings in health care costs.

Diabetes Canada has partnered with representatives from more than 100 stakeholder organizations to develop [Diabetes 360°](#) – a measurable, outcome-focused national strategy for the prevention and management of diabetes. It is based on the hugely successful 90-90-90 model implemented globally to combat HIV/AIDS and is the product of collaboration among 129 stakeholders including representation from nine provincial governments.

The Diabetes 360° framework includes specific evidence-based recommendations in the areas of prevention, screening, treatment and patient outcomes for diabetes, and is set up to deliver results in just seven years by focusing on the following key targets:

- 90 per cent of Canadians live in an environment that preserves wellness and prevents the development of diabetes
- 90 per cent of Canadians are aware of their diabetes status
- 90 per cent of Canadians living with diabetes are engaged in appropriate interventions to prevent diabetes and its complications
- 90 per cent of Canadians engaged in interventions are achieving improved health outcomes

These targets are based on extensive consultation and rigorous analysis of research, and the actions required for their achievement are detailed in the [Diabetes 360° report](#).

Diabetes Canada has submitted its recommendations for a national diabetes strategy to the Government of Canada and recommends that a seven-year national partnership be established with a strategic investment of \$150 million over the seven years. The partnership will collaborate with provinces and territories, civil society and private sector to prioritize and implement programs to achieve the Diabetes 360° targets and then sunset – a realistic and evidenced approach that can work for Canada.

Manitoba's diabetes epidemic can be stopped with the tools and resources derived from a nation-wide diabetes strategy.

Recommended Action 3:

The Government of Manitoba support the time-sensitive call to the Federal Government for a nation-wide diabetes strategy by urging all MLAs to sign the Diabetes 360° petition.

Diabetes is a complex disease with tremendous human and economic costs. Canada's solution must include a commitment by all levels of government to a coordinated and systematic approach to prevention, screening, treatment and positive health outcomes in order to stop the diabetes epidemic. Otherwise if nothing is done, it is anticipated that 50% of today's young adults will be diagnosed with diabetes in their lifetime.

Together with our volunteers and partners, Diabetes Canada will continue to encourage policy-makers, political parties and the elected governments to address the burden of diabetes in order to ensure the greatest support to children and adults living with the disease.

