

Diabetes 360°

Advocate Toolkit
June 2019

Table of Contents

1. Overview of Diabetes 360°	2
2. How volunteers can help	3
a. Sign our petition	3
b. Write an OpEd or share your story with local media	5
c. Meet your elected officials	5
3. Elected Official Meeting Feedback Form	8

1. Overview of Diabetes 360°

Diabetes is a national epidemic with 11 million Canadians living with diabetes or prediabetes. Treating the disease will cost our healthcare system nearly \$30 billion this year. Diabetes rates are rising at a rate of 40% per decade and show no signs of slowing down.

Every 24 hours:

- More than 20 Canadians die of diabetes complications
- 620 receive a diagnosis of diabetes
- 14 have lower limb amputations
- Our health care system spends \$79 million treating diabetes

The World Health Organization recommends every country implement a national diabetes strategy- and since 2013, Canada has been without one despite having one of the highest rates of diabetes prevalence amongst the world's most developed nations.

Canada must do better.

Diabetes can only be addressed by committed and coordinated leadership. With a national diabetes strategy, the federal government can help to prevent a million cases of diabetes and avoid hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations for diabetes-related consequences in the next ten years.

If we implement a Diabetes 360° nation-wide strategy, we can have:

- 90% of Canadians living in an environment that prevents the development of diabetes
- 90% of Canadians aware of their diabetes status
- 90% of Canadians with diabetes engaged in preventing complications
- 90% of those Canadians achieving improved health outcomes

Diabetes 360° can be implemented by a task force that bring metrics, best practices and continuous improvement expertise through partnership with the provinces, territories and municipalities to address key needs for people with or at risk of diabetes. That task force would need 7 years to do this work, at a total cost of \$150 million.

An investment of \$150 million will save \$20 billion in prevention alone with:

- 770,000 fewer cases of type 2 diabetes
- 245,000 fewer hospitalizations for diabetes
- 34,000 fewer lower limb amputations

Canada urgently needs a national diabetes strategy.

2. How volunteers can help

We've started a petition to ask all political parties to commit to launching a nation-wide diabetes strategy to prevent one million cases of diabetes and avoid hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations for diabetes-related conditions in the next ten years.

In 2019, our goal is to get as many signatures as possible so that the incoming government will prioritize implementing a Diabetes 360° strategy for Canada.

a. Sign our petition

We need all Canadians to sign and YOU can help!

- Ask your friends and family to sign the petition by visiting www.diabetes.ca/strategy, and ask them to each get 10 friends to do the same.
- Meet your local elected officials and candidates for federal office and challenge them to sign.
- Share the petition on your social media channels to get the word out. Sample messages are provided below.
- [Download](#) and print the petition and bring it along to your workplace, family gatherings such as BBQs or picnics.
- Like and share Diabetes Canada's messages on social media channels to amplify the message.

Facebook

- I'm joining Diabetes Canada in their fight to end our national diabetes epidemic! I've called on my governments to support the Diabetes 360° strategy. #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]

- Every three minutes, another Canadian is diagnosed with diabetes. I've called on my governments to support a national strategy to tackle the diabetes epidemic. #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]
- Many Canadians living with diabetes must choose between paying for food, rent or utilities and buying medications. I support the Diabetes 360° strategy, which will ensure that all Canadians with diabetes can access the medications they need. #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]
- There's a lot we still don't know about how to prevent, manage and cure diabetes. I support the Diabetes 360° strategy, which will work to support vital research into type 1 and type 2 diabetes in Canada. #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]
- Canada is one of the very few developed countries that doesn't have a diabetes strategy in place to help all levels of government work together. I'm joining Diabetes Canada in calling on my governments to support the Diabetes 360° strategy. #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]

Twitter

- I'm joining @DiabetesCanada in their fight to end our national diabetes epidemic! I've called on my governments to support the Diabetes 360° strategy. You can, too! #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]
- Did you know another Canadian is diagnosed with diabetes every three minutes? I'm calling on my governments to support a national strategy to tackle the diabetes epidemic. #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]
- Many Canadians with diabetes must choose between paying for food or rent and buying medications. I support the Diabetes 360° strategy, which will ensure that all Canadians with diabetes can access the medications they need. #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]
- There's a lot we still don't know about how to prevent, manage and cure diabetes. I support the Diabetes 360° strategy, which will work to support vital research into type 1 and type 2 diabetes in Canada. #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]
- I've asked my governments to support Diabetes 360°, which will partner with other initiatives to combat the poverty and food insecurity that contribute to the development of type 2 diabetes. #Diabetes360 #EndDiabetes [www.diabetes.ca/strategy]

b. Write an OpEd or share your story with local media

Local media love to publish stories about people in their community. Consider contacting your local papers and radio stations to tell them about your experience with diabetes and why you support Diabetes 360°.

You can also consider writing a brief OpEd or Letter to the Editor of your local paper – visit their website for guidelines such as maximum word count. Then speak from the heart!

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Do you live with food insecurity? How has that made living with prediabetes or diabetes more challenging for you?
- Did you struggle to get properly diagnosed with diabetes? how did that impact you?
- Do you have the medical care and support you need to live with prediabetes or diabetes? If not, what could be improved?
- Do you struggle to afford your diabetes medicines and/or supplies? How does that impact your ability to manage?
- Have you moved provinces or territories and had your diabetes care or coverage change? How did that affect you?

As inspiration, here is a [link](#) to an opinion piece by our CEO & President, Dr. Jan Hux.

c. Write your elected officials

Here is a draft letter you can use or modify to email your provincial, territorial or federal elected officials to ask for their support.

Subject line options:

1. Take action to end the diabetes epidemic in Canada
2. Demand a strategy to support Canadians with diabetes
3. Help prevent millions of Canadians from developing type 2 diabetes

Letter

Diabetes is a life-threatening chronic disease that affects (**me/my family/my community**). Eleven million Canadians now live with prediabetes or diabetes – more than double the number who did 15 years ago – and treating this disease costs our health-care system \$29 billion per year.

Something MUST change.

That's why I am writing to ask you to support Diabetes 360°, a nation-wide strategy to tackle the diabetes epidemic in Canada. This comprehensive and cost-effective strategy, which was developed by a collaboration among more than 100 expert stakeholders from across Canada, will save billions in public health costs.

The Diabetes 360° recommendations are evidence-based and address the many needs of people with diabetes, as well as those at risk. The strategy provides proper support for people with diabetes through increased access to medications, supplies, devices and care. It also supports prevention initiatives like enhanced screenings and food security programs, as well as ensuring sufficient research into the prevention and treatment of type 1 and type 2 diabetes alike.

Canada is suffering more from diabetes than other developed countries and it is one of the very few countries that doesn't have a diabetes strategy in place to help all levels of government and health-care work effectively together to improve patient outcomes. It's time for us to fix that.

That's why I ask you to speak up for your constituents living with or at risk of diabetes and support the resourcing of the Diabetes 360° strategy in the federal Budget 2020.

Sincerely,
[name]

d. Meet your elected officials

Consider asking to meet your Member of Parliament or Provincial Parliament or candidate for office to tell them why you believe Canada needs to adopt a national strategy to tackle diabetes and to ask them to sign our petition.

Before the meeting:

- Familiarize yourself with the key messages and background materials provided by Diabetes Canada.
- Read-through your elected representative / election candidate's website, social media accounts, etc. What is their party's position on diabetes or, more broadly, health care? Do they have any specific interests that tie-in with diabetes?
- Think-through what you'll say. If you have a story to share, boil it down and practice making it clear and compelling.

During the meeting:

- Stay “on message” but personalize it. Share your story or give local examples to help illustrate how the issue affects people in their constituency (riding) or community.
- Bring conversation back to main points, if it starts to digress, and draw on Diabetes Canada key messages to move discussion along.
- Stay calm and relaxed. If you don’t know the answer to a question, don’t worry; say so and offer to find out.
- Know when to bring the meeting to a close. Don’t feel like you have to keep talking just to run out the clock!
- Request a photo with the elected representative before you leave and share it on social media, tagging the representative and #Diabetes360.

After the meeting:

- Complete the Diabetes Canada meeting summary [form](#) and [submit](#)
- Post a thank you on social media, with photo, if available. Example: “Thanks, [name] for meeting with me to discuss Diabetes Canada recommendations. We appreciate it!”
- Include with your thank you email (*not* via social media) any follow-up information or materials promised during the meeting. Contact advocacy@diabetes.ca for guidance, if needed.

At the end of this document you’ll find a convenient [form](#) you can complete and [email](#) back to us to record your meeting.

3. Elected Official Meeting Feedback Form

Name of MP/Senator/MPP/MLA: _____

Name of Advocate(s): _____

1. What was your objective for this meeting?

2. Did you feel that the meeting achieved its objective? Why / Why not?

3. Did the MP have any questions that require follow-up? Did they request more information on a specific issue or policy recommendation? Did they make any commitments? If so, please provide details.

Please complete and return this form to advocacy@diabetes.ca. Thank you!