



An open letter to the Prime Minister of Canada on behalf of the 11 million Canadians affected by diabetes.

Dear Prime Minister Justin Trudeau,

We write as a group of concerned health-care professionals to urge you to take action to stop the diabetes epidemic in Canada. Right now, five million Canadians are living with diabetes and six million more are at risk of developing it soon.

Since 2000, the number of Canadians with diabetes has doubled, such that now one Canadian is diagnosed with this progressive, chronic disease every three minutes. Canadians at age 20 face a 50 per cent chance of developing diabetes in their lifetime. For First Nations people in Canada, that risk is up to 80 per cent.

By any definition, a disease affecting this proportion of our population is an epidemic.

Without urgent action, millions more Canadians will develop diabetes and suffer its debilitating complications. Diabetes contributes to 30 per cent of strokes, 40 per cent of heart attacks, 50 per cent of kidney failures requiring dialysis, 70 per cent of non-traumatic limb amputations, and, it's a leading cause of blindness.

Beyond the immeasurable human toll, most Canadians with diabetes pay more than three per cent of their income on prescribed medications, devices and supplies. Treating diabetes costs our health-care system — and therefore every tax paying Canadian — \$28 billion per year. Within a decade it will soar to \$40 billion per year.

Canada can no longer afford to ignore the impact of diabetes on individuals, families, our health-care system and the economy. Comprehensive, coordinated action is urgently needed to bring about necessary change.

That's why we're asking you and all parliamentarians to support Diabetes 360° — a national strategy to prevent and manage this epidemic. Spearheaded by Diabetes Canada, the evidence-based action plan was developed by a collaboration among more than 100 expert stakeholders from across Canada.

Diabetes 360° will enhance the prevention, screening and management of diabetes to achieve better health for Canadians. It will reduce unnecessary health-care spending by billions of dollars, protect Canada's productivity and competitiveness and improve the lives of millions of Canadians.

For a strategic investment of \$150 million over seven years, the federal government can achieve billions of dollars in savings to the health-care system and save countless lives. In one year alone, this action plan could prevent 110,000 cases of diabetes and save over \$1 billion in health-care costs.

With federal government support for Diabetes 360° in Budget 2019, implementation of the national strategy could begin in time for Canada to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Dr. Frederick Banting's discovery of insulin in 2021. One hundred years after Canada changed diabetes for the world, we can change the world for Canadians affected by diabetes.

Please take action now. Get Diabetes 360° included in the federal budget and help Canada retake a leadership role in the fight against diabetes.

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