

World Diabetes Day 2017: Women and Diabetes



Human blue circle formed in Mérida, Mexico

World Diabetes Day 2017 on 14 November focused on raising awareness of the impact of diabetes on women. The campaign, led by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and marked by the national members of IDF in over 160 countries, promoted the importance of affordable and equitable access for all women at risk for or living with diabetes to the essential diabetes medicines and technologies, self-management education and information they require to achieve optimal diabetes outcomes and strengthen their capacity to prevent type 2 diabetes.

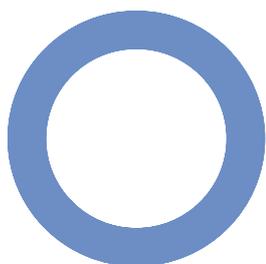
IDF marked the day with a stakeholder event in Brussels that brought together representatives from government, the health sector and civil society to discuss key issues of importance to the diabetes agenda through the prism of women. Data released in the 8th Edition of the IDF Diabetes Atlas, launched on World Diabetes Day, indicate that over 200 million women are currently living with diabetes. Many face multiple barriers in accessing cost-effective diabetes prevention, early detection, diagnosis, treatment and care, particularly in developing countries. Women with diabetes are more likely to be poor and have

less resources, face discrimination and have to survive in hostile social environments. Diabetes is also a serious and neglected threat to the health of mother and child, affecting one in six births and linked to complications during and after delivery.

Speaking at the event, IDF President Dr Shaukat Sadikot said, “Women and girls are key agents in the adoption of healthy lifestyles to prevent the further rise of diabetes and so it is important that they are given affordable and equitable access to the medicines, technologies, education and information they require to achieve optimal diabetes outcomes and strengthen their capacity to promote healthy behaviours.”

The event also served to promote IDF’s call to action for the 2018 High Level Meeting on NCDs, calling on governments to renew their commitments and increase their efforts towards achieving the agreed targets. These include a 0% increase in diabetes and obesity prevalence; 80% access to essential medicines and devices by 2025; and a 30% reduction in premature mortality from NCDs by 2030.

United by the blue circle, the global symbol for diabetes awareness and logo of World Diabetes Day, IDF's member associations and the wider diabetes community rallied around the theme and key messages of IDF's campaign by organizing a multitude of awareness activities around the world throughout the month of November. Over 900 activities in more than 100 countries were registered on the custom World Diabetes Day online events platform.



world diabetes day

14 November

IDF Europe (EUR) region

Niti Pall

This year the IDF Europe region organised events in three main political decision centres of the European Union (EU) and we reached out to selected Committees of the Council of Europe.

Thanks to a new collaboration with the Committee of the Regions (the European Union assembly of Regional and Local representatives) in Brussels, we organised a successful Diabetes Awareness Day exhibition and blood glucose (BG) testing event on the on 26 September 2017. During World Diabetes week, two important activities took place: a three-day event at various buildings of the European Commission (EC) in Brussels, including an exhibition and BG testing event; and an afternoon debate on "Women and diabetes" at the European Parliament (EP) in Strasbourg, France, complemented by an exhibition and BG screening for Members of the EP and staff.

At all three events, we presented our program IMPACT (the Initiative to Mobilize Parliamentarians to Act to Prevent, Care and Treat diabetes) to pursue our

These included:

- Blue lightings
- Physical activities
- Screenings for type 2 diabetes, gestational diabetes and diabetes complications
- Activities promoting women's health
- Meetings, exhibitions and fairs

A complete overview of World Diabetes Day 2017 activities can be viewed at www.idf.org/wdd-events

Images of World Diabetes Day 2017 activities are available at www.worlddiabetesday.org

Highlights of World Diabetes Day awareness activities organized at the national level are included below.

contribution to a more informed political environment, where knowledge and understanding are provided by people living and working with diabetes. The objective is to develop effective policies for people with diabetes and those at risk, and ensure they are adopted, financed, implemented and evaluated. This program is also promoted locally by our group of young advocates who are extremely active during the year. For WDD, they launched the second edition of eurMOVE, a challenge to stay physically active and raise awareness on diabetes with the aim to collect minutes of physical activity equivalent to 365 days until November 14th.

All around the year, we develop news reports and interviews dedicated to international days linked to diabetes for digital publication on our website, social media and direct mail. On the occasion of WDD, IDF Europe ran a series of four interviews of women having a direct relation with diabetes. Whether women have diabetes themselves or advocate for someone in their family, they all have one thing in common: diabetes is at

the centre of their daily life and they are committed to fight for stronger rights and less discrimination.

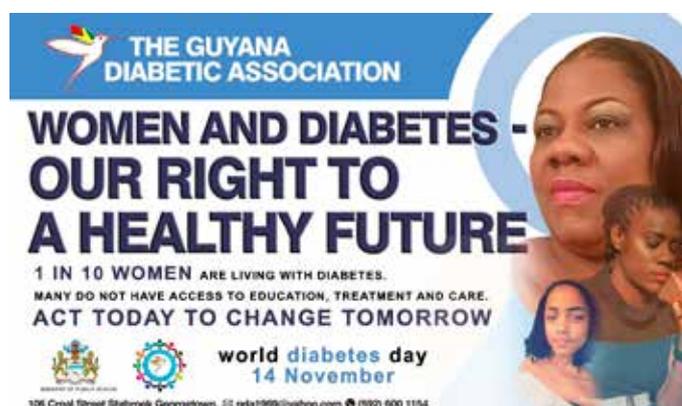
Finally, on November 14th, we launched a report aimed at identifying gaps in diabetes management which our members contributed to through a survey by suggesting

recommendations to improve the lives of people affected by diabetes in Europe.

Niti Pall is the Regional Chair-Elect of IDF Europe.

IDF North America and Caribbean (NAC) region

Glynis Beaton



With 200 million women living with diabetes, it is imperative that women take a stronger role in the fight against diabetes. Girls and women living with diabetes experience a number of challenges in today's world; power dynamics, gender roles, socioeconomic inequalities that influence vulnerability to diabetes including factors like poor diet and nutrition and physical inactivity. In developing countries women's access to healthcare services and health seeking behaviors amplify the impact of diabetes on women and their families.

Throughout the IDF North America and Caribbean region, World Diabetes Day (WDD) was celebrated with a number of activities to bring awareness within the region especially the need for more collaboration and funding to support the fight against diabetes with women and girls at the forefront.

Despite the major setback with hurricanes in the region that cost us major interruption and damage, every IDF Member Association made it a priority to focus on women and diabetes this WDD. Barbados hosted the Chair-

Elect (NAC Region) on WDD; St. Lucia launched the Blue Circle Magazine "Women and Diabetes." For all of November 2017, Guyana featured a young lady living with diabetes on Facebook for inspirational awareness. The Young Leaders in Diabetes in Guyana hosted 30 women in their magenta "Ladies of Distinction" leadership training for type 1 youths and cancer patients. A French Team Tea Party showcased "Easy management of diabetes," several exhibitions and a walk.

Highlighting women and diabetes this year meant a great deal since women take on the bulk of the weight dealing with diabetes for the entire family. Women take care of their families and work along with the daily stress of life, yet must still be a mother, a sister, an aunt, a cousin, a daughter and a partner— with leadership and compassion. This year more than any other year will give credit to all the work women do for diabetes and its complications. Women deserve the right to a healthy future!

Glynis Beaton is Regional Chair-Elect for the IDF North America and Caribbean region.

IDF Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region

Nizar Albache & Abdul Basit

Since 1991, World Diabetes Day (WDD) is the most important public awareness activity related to diabetes celebrated in more than 160 countries across the globe under the umbrella of International Diabetes Federation (IDF). The theme of WDD 2017 is “Women with Diabetes - our right to a healthy future”. IDF Member Associations (MA) in the IDF MENA region (comprised of 22 countries and 30 IDF MAs) have been actively involved in celebrating WDD all year. There are more than 35 million people with diabetes today living in the MENA region.

According to Dr. Sania Nishtar, Chairperson for the WHO Global Commission for Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), “Women and girls should be empowered with access to knowledge and resources to strengthen the capacity to prevent type 2 diabetes in their families and better safeguard their own health.” (Diabetes Voice, Oct 2017).

IDF estimates that 1 in 10 women are living with diabetes. Diabetes is the ninth leading cause of death in women globally, causing 2.1 million deaths each year. One important group is women with gestational diabetes (GDM) as 1 in 7 births is affected by gestational diabetes which is potentially preventable. As a result of socioeconomic conditions, women and girls with diabetes experience barriers in accessing cost-effective diabetes prevention, early detection, diagnosis, treatment and care, particularly in developing countries.

Education and awareness are a significant priority of all MAs in the region and WDD plays a pivotal role in awareness campaigns, empowerment of people, and in organization of infrastructure for clinical and public health strategies.

Our region is specifically focused on women and girls emphasizing the need for improving nutrition and physical activity, as they are not only cost effective from a health system perspective, but also potentially for society as a whole. Awareness and screening campaigns were organized in all MAs including, but not limited to, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Yemen, Egypt, Sudan and Pakistan.

Annual diabetes walks are always large events in MENA MAs. Likewise, seminars and training workshops for healthcare professionals have been conducted especially focusing on women’s health. In summary, all involved

in the care for people with diabetes are proud of all the work for WDD 2017 will help transform women’s health globally.

Nizar Albache is Chair for the IDF Middle East and North Africa Region

Abdul Basit is Chair-Elect for the IDF Middle East and North Africa region.

IDF South and Central America (SACA) region

Balduino Tschiedel

The IDF SACA region includes 20 countries, with Cuba to the north, Brazil to the east, Chile and Argentina to the south and Guatemala to the west. With great excitement, several activities were organized for World Diabetes Day (WDD) by SACA's Member Associations (MAs). Let's take a look at some of our activities from our MAs:

In Equator, Casa de la Diabetes held a variety of symposiums and health fairs in coordination with the IDF campaign theme "Women and Diabetes." Health professionals and students from all areas attended activities including a symposium called "Learning about Diabetes" for patients, family members and the community and a health fair on food and diabetes prevention.

Despite the political hardships Venezuela is experiencing, the Venezuelan Endocrinology Society, together with the Guerreros Azules Civil Association developed an event for 100 children with diabetes who also live with scarce economic conditions, entitled "The Path of the Warrior." There the event provided ten different stations with sports activities, each one of them establishing a parallel with type 1 diabetes.

The Uruguay Diabetes Association (ADU) organised a constitutional petition for the Ministry of Health to incorporate insulin pumps in the country's health assistance plan. In addition, they held an educational camp for children with diabetes and a scientific journey, with the theme "Women and Diabetes."

The Diabetes Care Association in Argentina (CUI.D.AR) held a two-day camp for children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes (8 to 21 years of age) while LAPDI, FAD and SAD presented an open-air meeting at a park, for the community with workshops and physical and educational activities.

The Brazilian Diabetes Society (SBD) scheduled an event at a public venue lasting the entire day on November 14th with lectures, mini shows, laboratory and ophthalmological exams, and anthropometric measurements – it is estimated 3000 people attended. In addition, sports events (a run, walk and bike ride) kept everyone fit and happy. Brazil's 11 regional branches organised lighting ceremonies at public monuments in blue and promoting local lectures.

The National Association of Diabetes Care (ANAD) held an entire week dedicated to diabetes, with educational

actions, plus two thousand glycaemia, vision and foot tests free of charge. A stand for diabetic retinopathy telediagnosis was assembled at a public venue.

ADJ Brazil provided glycaemia tests and diabetes orientation meetings, in addition to participating with SBD for the walk, run, bike events. They also presented an event at the Museum of Image and Sound, with the theme "Women and Diabetes" with life stories told by patients.

The Institute for Children with Diabetes (ICD) hosted a breakfast with the press, to present data on diabetes, and its traditional Race to Beat Diabetes (its 19th anniversary), which took place Sunday November 19th. Thousands of people participated to help fight diabetes.

I believe in the importance of World Diabetes Day through all the events and activities affiliated to IDF around the world. We do this to generate global awareness about diabetes, which is sometimes so silent, but always dangerous.

Balduino Tschiedel is Regional Chair-Elect of the IDF South and Central America region.