

Breaking barriers for better access to diabetes care

IDF side event to the 76th World Health
Assembly*

**With the support of the American Diabetes Association*

Event information

On 23 May 2023, IDF hosted the side event, **“Breaking Barriers for Better Access to Diabetes Care”**, during the 76th World Health Assembly. The event took place in Geneva, Switzerland and was streamed live to the IDF network.

The poster features the International Diabetes Federation logo on the left. The main title 'BREAKING BARRIERS FOR BETTER ACCESS TO DIABETES CARE' is in large, bold, dark blue letters. Below it, the text 'A SIDE EVENT TO THE 76th WHA' is displayed, followed by the date '23 MAY 2023', time '18:00-20:00 CEST', and location 'INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL GENEVA'. A central image shows a man in a blue shirt speaking at a table. To the right of this image is a decorative graphic of overlapping purple and blue triangles. Further right, the text 'LIVESTREAMED ON ZOOM' is shown. At the bottom right, it says 'WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION'.

BREAKING BARRIERS FOR BETTER ACCESS TO DIABETES CARE

A SIDE EVENT TO THE
76th WHA
23 MAY 2023
18:00-20:00 CEST
INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL
GENEVA

**LIVESTREAMED
ON ZOOM**

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION

Access to diabetes care

Access to quality care for people living with diabetes varies widely worldwide. In many countries people living with diabetes experience challenges in accessing affordable quality care and treatment, especially in low- and middle-income countries, where 80% of people with diabetes live.

IDF estimates that 6.7 million people die each year as a consequence of diabetes and its complications. Many of these deaths could be prevented if countries provide equitable access to diabetes medicines, supplies and care.

Our event:

- highlighted the global challenges in access to quality diabetes care.
- illustrated the potential of the WHO Global Diabetes Compact to improve diabetes care by 2030.
- showcased the role of diabetes associations and people living with diabetes in decision-making to improve access to care.



Highlights from the event

Honourable Dr Firass Abiad, Minister of Public Health, Lebanon

"Lebanon has been facing a severe economic and political crisis, and that has led to shortages in essential medications. Unfortunately, diabetes care and insulin were affected ... This has forced us to shift the focus from expensive medications for diabetes care to start talking prevention, lifestyle changes and focus more on patient education."

"Our national health strategy, launched three months ago, aims at pivoting the healthcare system towards prevention and primary care. The aim is to build a more accessible, equitable and affordable system based on comprehensive and integrated care."



The Honourable Dr John Mangwiro, Deputy Minister of Health and Child Care, Zimbabwe

"We need increased access to care across the continent. In Zimbabwe we are advocating for insulin and diabetes medication to be provided for free for all people with diabetes."

"People living with diabetes need assistance from healthcare providers, who in some cases may, in terms of training, fall short of what is required for them to support people living with diabetes. Education for healthcare providers is, therefore, another thing we need to push forward."



Dr Baser Khan Achakzai, Director General Health, Pakistan

"Pakistan has launched a nationwide, culturally sensitive campaign. The Pakistan Diabetes Prevention Programme exploits modern technology and telecommunications for a cost-effective means to spread the campaign widely. The Diabetes Registry of Pakistan was established to assess the extent of the national diabetes burden. These efforts are recognised and appreciated by WHO and IDF."

"Addressing the growing burden of diabetes in Pakistan requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach ... the progress made in capacity-building, policy-planning, advocacy and the provision of access to essential medicine and care services is commendable. However, there is still much work to be done. Let us continue to join hands to raise awareness and allocate resources to strengthen our efforts in preventing and managing diabetes. Together we can create a healthier future for Pakistan and the world."





Dr Bente Mikkelsen, Director, WHO NCD department

"Collectively, I think we have started to walk the walk."

The WHO Global Diabetes Compact needs all hands on deck to achieve the vision that all people who are diagnosed with diabetes have access to equitable, comprehensive, affordable and quality treatment and care. Universal Health Coverage is critical to improving diabetes care and prevention. People with lived experience should be an integral part of that solution."

Dr David Beran, University of Geneva

"Access to insulin remains a challenge, and it's a failure of the global community that people still die from lack of access to this life-saving medicine discovered in 1921. We have failed to deliver healthcare for people with type 1 and type 2 diabetes as well as gestational diabetes. There are important areas where we have fallen short such as managing diabetes complications and addressing mental health issues that are common in diabetes. Social determinants of health impact people with diabetes and can also lead to people developing diabetes, whether it's due to access to nutrition or access to physical activity. How do we address these vulnerable populations everywhere, not just in middle and high-income countries?"



Ms Ida Ahmadpour, WHO, Global Diabetes Compact

"The most important thing is that people with diabetes need to be in decision-making roles within their organisations... It is essential to include people in that capacity and include people with all types of diabetes ... You have to have a level playing field to create more opportunities for participation. There needs to be an equal balance of power."

Dr Gojka Roglic, former WHO Medical Officer

"A lot has been discussed during what has been an extremely lively and interesting debate. Unfortunately, the picture is not entirely rosy. However, as we have heard there are very good reasons for optimism when it comes to improving access to diabetes care."



Prof Akhtar Hussain, IDF President

"What gives hope is to see the high level of engagement from policymakers. The panellists at this event have made important contributions and suggestions as to where the answers may be found, but the most important part of the solution is ensuring that evidence-based suggestions are converted into evidence-based policy. You, the policymakers, are key to making this happen."



Impact of the event

72 people attended the event in Geneva.

3,870 people registered to follow the event online – with 1,243 people from 152 countries joining live on the day.

The [recording of the event](#) was watched over 380 times in the three months following the event.

44 people responded to the feedback questionnaire, rating the event an 8,7/10. Below are some of their comments:

"It's excellent that the recording can be shared with a broader network."

"Excellent innovative session"

"Congratulations on the event. It was really very fruitful"

"IDF is doing a very good job regarding diabetes and by holding online events that allow everyone to enrich their knowledge about diabetes."

"Thank you for the wonderful session and for updating us with more valuable information."

