



PRESS RELEASE

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ADOPTS CRUCIAL DIABETES RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE COMMISSION AND MEMBER STATES TO ADDRESS THE GROWING DIABETES EPIDEMIC

16 March 2012 - The European Coalition for Diabetes (ECD) welcomes the adoption on 14 March of the European Parliament Resolution addressing the EU diabetes epidemic. The Resolution calls on the Commission to develop and implement a targeted EU Diabetes Strategy, to address the burden of this chronic disease, affecting more than 32 million EU citizens and even more in the future. The Resolution is a great step forward and demonstrates strong political commitment at the EU-level to tackle this devastating disease.

On 14 March the European Parliament adopted the Resolution on addressing the EU diabetes epidemic, driven by the cross-party and cross-national EU Diabetes Working Group (EUDWG), with the strong support of other fellow MEPs. The European Coalition for Diabetes (ECD) warmly welcomes this crucial Resolution as a great achievement marking a significant step forward towards improved diabetes prevention, diagnosis, management, education and research, for the better health and quality of life of all European citizens living with this condition.

EUDWG MEP Co-Chair Dr Simon Busuttill commented: *“Today’s Resolution is a big victory in the fight against the diabetes epidemic, because it affirms that diabetes is a priority area for the European Parliament. The European Commission will now be considering how we can do more for the millions of diabetes patients all over Europe”*.

Baroness Sarah Ludford, another EUDWG MEP Co-Chair, also expressed her satisfaction. *“It’s a fantastic achievement to have got this Resolution calling for an EU strategy for diabetes passed after years of effort by the European Coalition for Diabetes and the EU Diabetes Working Group of MEPs”* she said. *“We have done it only by working in a truly collaborative spirit across parties and patient interest groups, all of us motivated purely by a determination to see vastly improved prevention and care as well as research for a cure. Now we need to see action so that the huge challenge of diabetes for citizens and healthcare systems is properly met”*.

“The political momentum resulting from the adoption of this Resolution and the Danish Presidency focus on chronic diseases with diabetes as a model will contribute to the advancement of EU and national policies addressing the diabetes epidemic and its increasing burden on national healthcare systems” stated Anne-Marie Felton, on behalf of the four ECD Co-Chairs. *“We will do our utmost to maintain the momentum of this significant achievement by continuing to collaborate with the EU Diabetes Working Group Co-Chairs. We recognise and thank all MEPs for their support in securing the Resolution”*.

The debate comes at a time of great institutional attention towards non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes, especially following the United Nations Summit on NCDs held in September 2011, when UN member states pledged their commitment to address the global NCD crisis and which MEPs backed by passing a Resolution urging effective EU action.

On 14 March, the European Parliament specifically called on the Commission to develop and implement a targeted EU strategy on diabetes prevention, diagnosis, management, education and research, and on EU governments to develop and implement national programmes. With this

Resolution, the European Parliament testified to the need to take real action to tackle the diabetes epidemic, for EU patients as well as for all EU citizens.

Indeed, diabetes is one of the most common non-communicable diseases estimated to affect more than 32 million EU citizens, i.e. nearly 10% of the total EU population, and to be responsible for over 10% of national healthcare expenditure. The prevalence of diabetes is predicted to increase by 17% by 2030 across all age groups in Europe. Inevitably the burden on healthcare systems will rise as well. Much can be done to avoid Type 2 diabetes, which is a preventable disease and for which risk factors have been identified. However, the disease is frequently diagnosed too late and cannot be cured, leading to serious complications and even death. Type 1 diabetes is also on the increase, affecting children at an early age with devastating long term consequences; this kind of diabetes can also lead to serious forms of discrimination. Greater support is needed for research into both Types of diabetes.

Note to the Editor:

The **European Coalition for Diabetes (ECD)** gathers together four organisations, the Alliance for European Diabetes Research (EURADIA), the Foundation of European Nurses in Diabetes (FEND), the International Diabetes Federation (IDF Europe) and Primary Care Diabetes Europe (PCDE), which are devoted to improving the prevention of diabetes and the health and quality of life of European citizens living with diabetes by influencing EU policy.

The **EU Diabetes Working Group (EUDWG)** is a cross-party and cross-national group of MEPs with particular interest in diabetes. The EUDWG in the European Parliament represents the best interests of all people with diabetes in Europe and provides dedicated support and advice to the diabetes community on driving policy change.

European Coalition for Diabetes (ECD) - www.ecdiabetes.eu
EU Diabetes Working Group (EUDWG) - www.ecdiabetes.eu/EUDWG.html

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