

novo nordisk launches changing diabetes barometer

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At a media roundtable in Brussels today, Novo Nordisk presented the Changing Diabetes Barometer, which will measure and share the worldwide progress in the fight against diabetes on an annual basis.

The Barometer is a tool that will provide healthcare professionals, patient organisations, politicians, institutions and media with valuable information on how to improve the quality of diabetes care, bring down diabetes-related complications, extend patients' life expectancy and reduce costs.

"We have been driving the fight against diabetes in the dark for far too long. We need to put the lights on. We need to keep score of our shared efforts against diabetes to drive sustainable change. This is what the Changing Diabetes Barometer is about. It provides information on how we can better improve the lives of people with diabetes and how to better prioritise diabetes care," says Lise Kingo, executive vice president at Novo Nordisk.

To support the Changing Diabetes Barometer, Novo Nordisk will, on an annual basis, publish a report with key findings from the Barometer.

The first report covers 21 countries and highlights that significant savings, as much as 20% reduction of lifelong healthcare costs, can be made if people with diabetes are diagnosed earlier and before any complications arise. Furthermore, disease complications can be reduced by improving control. A person with complications is 3 – 6 times as expensive as a person without complications measured in healthcare costs. Disease complications can be serious, including kidney failure, limb amputations, blindness and cardiovascular disease.

The report highlights that doing nothing is costly, and that treating earlier and better reduces overall costs. If nothing is done, healthcare costs, social costs and the cost of lost productivity will increase dramatically as the number of people with diabetes rapidly rises.

It is not the number of people with diabetes in itself that is driving cost. It is the disease complications following late detection and poor control that put a heavy toll on healthcare systems.

"Despite estimates showing that the number of people with diabetes will rise to 380 million worldwide by 2025, the Changing Diabetes Barometer report shows that only a handful of countries have the necessary systems in place to measure diabetes and its effects on the population," says Professor Jean-Claude Mbanya, vice dean and professor of medicine and endocrinology at the University of Yaoundé, Cameroon. "If we act now by taking lessons from the Barometer, we can improve knowledge, treatment and awareness of the disease."

The report also highlights that more data is needed. Only seven out of the 21 countries examined in the first edition of the Barometer have data on important treatment indicators such as blood pressure, blood sugar and lipid levels. Furthermore, the report identifies that only three out of the 21 countries have systems in place to enable registration of data and consistent follow-up support for physicians.

Novo Nordisk hopes that the Barometer will become a framework to discuss and measure prevention, progress and treatment data.

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