

New Canadian Diabetes Cost Model Paints a Sobering View of Diabetes in Canada

OTTAWA (December 7, 2009) – In a report released today, *An Economic Tsunami: The Cost of Diabetes in Canada*, the Canadian Diabetes Association has introduced an important new tool in the fight against diabetes in Canada: the Canadian Diabetes Cost Model. The Model details the dramatic increase in the prevalence and cost of diabetes in Canada, both of which have escalated sharply over the last decade and are expected to continue their rapid ascent for the foreseeable future.

“For the first time, Canada has a Diabetes Cost Model specifically based on Canadian data to estimate both the current and future costs of diabetes,” said Ellen Malcolmson, President and CEO of the Canadian Diabetes Association. “If left unchecked, the economic burden of diabetes in Canada could escalate to nearly \$17 billion by 2020, an increase of more than \$10 billion from 2000, and the number of Canadians diagnosed with diabetes will have nearly tripled. The results are a sobering reminder of the action required to reduce the burden of diabetes in Canada while improving the individual health for people living with the disease.”

The Canadian Diabetes Cost Model

The Model, designed for the Canadian Diabetes Association, is the first such model using Canadian data that can be utilized to determine the economic impact of diabetes on Canadian society, both now and in the future. The Model can:¹

- Project the costs, incidence and prevalence of the disease, as well as co-morbidities common among people with diabetes;
- Determine, where efficacy data exists, the financial cost benefit of initiatives designed to delay or prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes and to reduce the occurrence and severity of complications arising from the disease for people living with diabetes; and
- Be further developed to provide province-specific data that will allow for even broader application to assess the cost effectiveness of potential diabetes interventions, programs and services that could aid governments in developing future diabetes strategies.

Ultimately, the Model is an important tool in the fight against diabetes in Canada. Future enhancements could expand the variety of analysis possible with the Model.

Prevalence of Diabetes in Canada

The Model documents the dramatic increase in the prevalence of diabetes in Canada over the last decade and for the decade to come, which includes:¹

- The number of people diagnosed with diabetes in Canada is expected to nearly double between 2000 and 2010, from 1.3 million to 2.5 million (a rate that climbs to more than 3 million when you include Canadians with undiagnosed diabetes);
- Over the next decade, another 1.2 million Canadians are expected to be diagnosed with diabetes;

- These increases push the share of the total population with diabetes from 4.2 per cent in 2000 to 7.3 per cent in 2010 to 9.9 per cent by 2020; and
- Today nearly one in four Canadians either has diabetes or prediabetes. More than twenty people are diagnosed with the disease every hour of every day.

The Cost of Diabetes in Canada

Diabetes is not only a personal crisis for people living with the disease, and their family, it is also a tremendous financial burden for the Canadian healthcare system and society as a whole.¹ The Canadian Diabetes Cost Model found that:¹

- The economic burden of diabetes in Canada is expected to be approximately \$12.2 billion in 2010, which is an increase of \$5.9 billion or nearly double its level in 2000;
- The cost of the disease is expected to rise by another \$4.7 billion by 2020; and
- Interventions that reduce the prevalence of diabetes could significantly reduce costs. For example, a reduction in current incidence rates of two per cent a year in conjunction with better disease management leading to fewer visits to doctors' offices could lead to a significant cost saving (9% in direct cost and 7% in indirect costs).

“To offset costs and reduce the incidence of diabetes, we need to invest resources to enable better diabetes management, which will help decrease both hospitalization rates and medical complications associated with diabetes,” said Malcolmson. “Currently, the Association is taking steps to address the economic burden of diabetes in Canada by supporting research, focusing efforts and resources, and providing education and services to both people living with diabetes, as well as healthcare professionals.”

Call to Action

Reducing the prevalence of diabetes in Canada will take time and will happen very gradually.¹ It will require broad-based personal and societal change.¹ Moving forward, and in response to the growing burden of diabetes in Canada, *An Economic Tsunami: The Cost of Diabetes in Canada* recommends immediate action be taken in three key areas, including:¹

- A renewed, re-focused and enhanced Canadian Diabetes Strategy and Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative;
- An enhanced tax strategy that addresses the out-of-pocket costs for people living with diabetes;
- Investment in high-quality, investigator-driven research, as well as strategic, targeted research partnerships with Canadian universities, research institutions and hospitals.

While the Canadian Diabetes Association continues to lead the fight against diabetes by helping people with diabetes live healthy lives while we work to find a cure, we cannot do it alone. Governments must recognize this growing burden and take immediate action.

About The Canadian Diabetes Association

Across the country, the Canadian Diabetes Association is leading the fight against diabetes by helping people with diabetes live healthy lives while we work to find a cure. We are supported in our efforts by a community-based network of volunteers, employees, healthcare professionals, researchers and partners. By providing education and services, advocating on behalf of people with diabetes, supporting research, and translating research into practical applications - we are delivering on our mission. For more information, please visit www.diabetes.ca or call 1-800-BANTING (226-8464).

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Note to Editor

About The Report

This initiative was supported by an unrestricted educational grant provided by Novo Nordisk Canada Inc. and has been developed to achieve the following objectives:

- To estimate the cost of diabetes in Canada including direct and indirect costs;
- To create a forecasting model to project future costs associated with diabetes;
- To examine the potential of policy interventions to offset the economic burden of diabetes on Canadians.

The two main sources of data used for the estimate and forecasts come from the National Diabetes Surveillance System (NDSS) and Health Canada's study the Economic Burden of Illness in Canada (EBIC). The model aimed to integrate the administrative prevalence and incidence estimates from NDSS with the economic cost estimates from EBIC.



Media Release

¹ Canadian Diabetes Association. *An Economic Tsunami: The Cost of Diabetes in Canada*. November 2009.