

## press release

### **Vancouver joins with global cities to push for action against urban diabetes**

*Public health initiative kicks off with special guest, Ben McKendry from the Vancouver Whitecaps FC to demonstrate the value of cross-sector collaboration to build healthy communities*

**VANCOUVER, Nov. 14, 2016 /CNW/** - Today, municipal, business, academic and healthcare leaders from the City of Vancouver, the Canadian Diabetes Association, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver Coastal Health and Novo Nordisk Canada Inc. launched *Cities Changing Diabetes* in Vancouver to help tackle urban diabetes.

Physical environment, and how people live, work, exercise, eat and sleep impacts health. Around the world and here in Canada, cities like Vancouver are on the front-line of the urban diabetes epidemic. Approximately 60,000 people in Vancouver currently live with diabetes, while only 46,000 have been diagnosed. Today, approximately 120,000 people in Vancouver are at risk of developing diabetes in their lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

Diabetes prevalence rates vary by neighbourhood. In Vancouver City Centre, diabetes incidence is around 5.64 per cent, and 5.23 per cent in Vancouver's Westside, whereas there are more people dealing with diabetes in the Downtown Eastside at 7.85 per cent and Midtown at 7.4 per cent. The highest rates appear in South Vancouver at 10.07 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

As the number of people living with diabetes in Vancouver continues to rise—along with associated healthcare expenses—a number of partners have come together to educate people on diabetes risks and to fight urban diabetes by (1) understanding and mapping the prevalence of diabetes in Vancouver and the neighbourhoods most at risk, (2) sharing information among cities, and (3) implementing plans of action with local communities using a complex adaptive systems approach.

#### **About Cities Changing Diabetes**

*Cities Changing Diabetes* is a commitment to pushing for urgent action against urban diabetes on a global scale. The aim is to map its extent, share solutions and tackle the growing challenge of diabetes in the world's great cities, because we believe that when businesses, city leaders and planners, healthcare professionals, academics, and community leaders pull together, we can transform our cities into healthier places to live, work and play – and bring down the risk of urban diabetes. Vancouver joins the cities of Copenhagen, Houston, Johannesburg, Mexico City, Shanghai, and Tianjin in this global initiative. To learn more about the Cities Changing Diabetes program, visit [citieschangingdiabetes.com](http://citieschangingdiabetes.com).

**Note:** In Vancouver, Cities Changing Diabetes is funded in part by Novo Nordisk Canada Inc. Local partners will work collaboratively on the mapping, sharing and action phases of this initiative.

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### Participant Quotes:

#### **The Hon. Peter Fassbender, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

*"As the most physically active province in the country, the Government of B.C. is one of many involved in promoting a healthier province. Partnerships like Cities Changing Diabetes are integral to furthering our province's health and combating serious public health concerns like diabetes, which are linked to our increasingly urbanized lifestyle."*

#### **Councillor Heather Deal, Deputy Mayor, City of Vancouver**

*"Cities Changing Diabetes fits seamlessly into the City of Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy, a long-term, integrated plan for healthier people, healthier places and a healthier planet. Along with our partners, the City of Vancouver is committed to the fight to defeat urban diabetes and firmly believes that our city can become a global leader in healthy living."*

#### **Rick Blickstead, President and CEO, Canadian Diabetes Association**

*"The epidemic of diabetes cannot be solved alone—the issue is far too complex. We must engage in innovative collaboration across sectors—government, business, education and advocacy—to create meaningful change. Cities Changing Diabetes presents a unique opportunity for cross-sector collaboration with the goal to end diabetes."*

#### **Dr. Joy Johnson, Vice-President Research and International, Simon Fraser University**

*"At Simon Fraser University, we believe that through cross-collaborative efforts like Cities Changing Diabetes, significant headway can be made towards addressing urban diabetes and reducing its rapid growth. We are proud to be an academic partner in this endeavour that will improve the health of local communities – that will improve the lives of others."*

#### **Dr. Rolando Barrios, Senior Medical Director, Vancouver Community, Vancouver Coastal Health**

*"Vancouver Coastal Health is on the front lines in the fight against diabetes. Our clinics work every day to educate and help Vancouverites prevent or manage diabetes, with a focus on healthy living. We know first-hand that there is a great need to slow the growing rate of diabetes in urban centres and we are hopeful that Cities Changing Diabetes will help us not only slow the rising tide of diabetes, but eliminate it all together."*

#### **Brian Hilberdink, President, Novo Nordisk Canada Inc.**

*"Cities Changing Diabetes is a key component of Novo Nordisk's commitment to push for urgent action on urban diabetes here in Canada, and around the world. At its heart is the belief that when businesses, government leaders, healthcare professionals, academics and community organizations work together for a common purpose, we can transform our cities into healthier places to live and work. Together, we hope to defeat urban diabetes."*

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1 "Cities Changing Diabetes Rule of Halves Analysis – Vancouver" InSource, November 1, 2016

SOURCE City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, Canadian Diabetes Association, Simon Fraser University, Novo Nordisk Canada Inc.

Image with caption: "From left to right: Ann-Britt Everett, Danish Honorary Consul for BC; Brian Hilberdink, President, Novo Nordisk Canada Inc.; Dr. Rolando Barrios, Senior Medical Director, Vancouver Coastal Health; the Hon. Peter Fassbender, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development; Councillor Heather Deal, Deputy Mayor, City of Vancouver; Dr. Joy Johnson, Vice President Research and International, Simon Fraser University; Rick Blickstead, President and CEO, Canadian Diabetes Association. (CNW Group/City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, Canadian Diabetes Association, Simon Fraser University, Novo Nordisk Canada Inc.)". Image available at: [http://photos.newswire.ca/images/download/20161114\\_C3842\\_PHOTO\\_EN\\_817899.jpg](http://photos.newswire.ca/images/download/20161114_C3842_PHOTO_EN_817899.jpg)

Image with caption: "The Hon. Peter Fassbender, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development for BC "kicks off" the Cities Changing Diabetes initiative in Vancouver. (CNW Group/City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, Canadian Diabetes Association, Simon Fraser University, Novo Nordisk Canada Inc.)". Image available at: [http://photos.newswire.ca/images/download/20161114\\_C3842\\_PHOTO\\_EN\\_817901.jpg](http://photos.newswire.ca/images/download/20161114_C3842_PHOTO_EN_817901.jpg)

Image with caption: "From left to right: Carl Valentine, Team Ambassador, Vancouver Whitecaps FC; Dr. Joy Johnson, Vice President Research and International, Simon Fraser University; Councillor Heather Deal, Deputy Mayor, City of Vancouver; Rick Blickstead, President and CEO, Canadian Diabetes Association; Ben McKendry, Vancouver Whitecaps FC; Ann-Britt Everett, Danish Honorary Consul for BC. (CNW Group/City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, Canadian Diabetes Association, Simon Fraser University, Novo Nordisk Canada Inc.)". Image available at: [http://photos.newswire.ca/images/download/20161114\\_C3842\\_PHOTO\\_EN\\_817927.jpg](http://photos.newswire.ca/images/download/20161114_C3842_PHOTO_EN_817927.jpg)

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