



IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

The role of data, access to innovation and integrated care

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Hosted by MEP Christel Schaldemose (S&D, DK)

Every 6 seconds a person in Europe dies of a diabetes related condition

Diabetes is a rapidly growing health crisis affecting around one in ten Europeans, that is around 60 million people in Europe, with type 2 diabetes accounting for more than 90% of all cases. For them the risk of heart failure is three times higher. They may also lose their vision, a limb or develop diabetic kidney disease. Improving care for people with diabetes requires us to think differently. We cannot expect health systems designed to care for people with acute illnesses to meet the needs of large numbers of citizens living with long-term conditions such as diabetes. It's time to reimagine how care is delivered.

Improving health outcomes for people with diabetes

The EFPIA Diabetes Platform White Paper “Improving Outcomes for People with Diabetes” identified three key elements of the diabetes challenge: unlocking the full potential of data, empowering patients and rethinking our health systems under financial and demographic pressure. These three provided the thematic thread that ran through the day's discussions among healthcare professionals, policymakers, industry representatives, patient groups and other stakeholders.

Participants agreed that the European dimension is critical: EU Member States and other European countries need to improve and standardise data-collection and share this more widely in order to promote best practices in care management. There was a warm welcome for the initiative of the new European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, on building and developing a European Health Data Space.

According to John Nolan, Acting Lead of the European Diabetes Forum, we should put patients at the helm of driving an agreed, integrated policy, and adapt healthcare systems to chronic diseases by improving collaboration with all stakeholders.



Better data:

We can collect all the data in the world but unless we use it for the right purpose, we will not have the impact we want and the cost of collecting data will not be commensurate to the benefits we obtain... The right data and information will be key in motivating people to act against diabetes.

Troels Vingtoft Rye-Andersen, Head of Government Affairs and Patient Relations at Novo Nordisk, Co-Chair EFPIA Diabetes Platform



Innovation, including self-management via digitalisation:

Digital tools complement the interaction with doctors, without replacing it. We need to make sure that we use this technology in a way that does not dehumanise the patient-doctor relationship. Technology is there to empower patients.

Milena Richter, Head of EU Office at Sanofi, Co-Chair EFPIA Diabetes Platform

The two Co-Chairs of EFPIA Diabetes Platform urged rethinking the healthcare system in the face of demographic and funding challenges. They highlighted the fact that diabetes is a disease area where health systems are not spending money in the right way, with an excessive amount of the resources available going on treating preventable complications. Primary care will be critical in future.

Panel discussion: Policies at EU and national level

The solutions to many of the challenges outlined in the White Paper can be found at a European level. The development of new evidence, application of existing knowledge, adoption of standard outcomes, reduced fragmentation in registry data, the integration of new technologies, access to innovative therapies, and a reimagining of how care is delivered can be driven by EU policy action and close collaboration of Member States. Across health systems, stakeholders view the shift to outcomes-based healthcare as essential to delivering what matters to people with diabetes.

MEP Christel Schaldemose highlighted the role of the European Parliament in acting on behalf of patients and pushing the Commission to act.



Setting targets is crucial to achieving goals. We do it in the climate area. We do not know how we will reach these targets but setting targets makes us deliver. Regarding Diabetes, we should set targets on prevalence, treatment and perhaps even lifespan.

Christel Schaldemose, MEP (Member of the European Parliament, Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats group from Denmark)



Dirk Van den Steen, Policy Officer at Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE), and working in the unit that assesses national health systems, urged authorities to make these more patient-centred, taking measures to avoid unnecessary hospitalisations and making primary care more efficient with a greater focus on prevention and access.

John Nolan underlined the importance of bringing together different stakeholders because Europe has not succeeded well enough in translating research findings into better outcomes for patients.



The EUDF comes from the conclusion that we have not been good enough so far at translating research findings into better outcomes for patients. This is because we think this field is very fragmented and unless innovation reaches patients, nothing will change. If we manage to unite around a single message, then we can go to policy makers and tell them what we want.

John Nolan, Acting Lead, European Diabetes Forum (in constitution)

Panel discussion: The role of data, disease self-management and primary care

Bastian Hauck, CEO of Dedoc Labs, demanded far greater patient involvement at national level from the start, not at the end, of the decision-making process. A heartfelt voice, Bastian made the audience feel what a diabetes patient endures every day of his/her life.



A person with Type I Diabetes takes 180 decision a day. It is something I have to do alongside of being a brother, a father, a son, a friend, a worker.

Bastian Hauck, CEO, Dedoc Labs GmbH

Dr. Xavier Cos, Chairman of Primary Care Diabetes Europe, emphasised the need to provide equal, balanced and tailored care for people with diabetes everywhere in Europe, despite the different healthcare systems.



What is the aim of collecting data? It is implementation, it is action. We need clear targets and objectives towards implementation.

Xavier Cos, Chairman, Primary Care Diabetes Europe



Anne-Marie Felton, President of the Foundation of European Nurses in Diabetes (FEND), called for more specialist diabetes nurses among the 5 million nurses in Europe delivering healthcare.



We need to be honest with people with diabetes. A cure is not just there but we should not deprive people of hope. People with diabetes are central to the delivery of treatment. Every person with diabetes should have a diabetes specialist nurse.

Anne-Marie Felton, President, Foundation of European Nurses in Diabetes



It is important to have a forum where cross-party collaboration takes place. We will try to restart the diabetes working group. A lot of colleagues are interested in diabetes so the first initial are positive.

Christel Schaldemose, MEP (Member of the European Parliament, Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats group from Denmark)

EFPIA launched a White Paper entitled “[IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES, The role of health data, access to innovation and rethinking care](#)” at the event which was hosted by MEP Christel Schaldemose at the European Parliament on 21 November 2019. The paper is the output of a dynamic process involving a number of diabetes actors via national roundtables in Sweden, Belgium and Germany. It offers recommendations spanning data, patient empowerment and integrated care.

