

DIABETES IS SERIOUS: IT'S TIME FOR ACTION

Diabetes UK NI's manifesto for the 2022 Assembly election

As we emerge from the coronavirus pandemic and look to make significant transformation to the health and social care system, diabetes must be a priority for all political parties in the next Assembly mandate.

Diabetes UK Northern Ireland is calling for:

- Prioritising catching up on the significant **backlog of diabetes appointments** caused by the coronavirus pandemic to avoid the serious consequences of missed appointments, checks, treatment, and delayed diagnoses
- A systematic and **robust method of auditing of diabetes** in Northern Ireland and the infrastructure needed to support it, like the National Diabetes Audit in England and Wales
- Recurrent and sustainable investment in the **Diabetes Prevention Programme** as a key means to support people at risk of developing type 2 diabetes to make changes to their health and behaviour so fewer people develop the condition each year
- Implementation of commitments within the **Mental Health Strategy** to ensure that mental health interventions for people with long-term conditions like diabetes are available to those who need it
- A plan to **increase uptake of diabetes technology** to everyone who can benefit from it, regardless of diabetes type
- The development of a **comprehensive workforce strategy** to address service gaps which are currently adversely affecting care of people with diabetes

DiABETES UK
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.

We need bold and brave political leadership to direct this change; to catch up on the setbacks caused by coronavirus; to ensure data on diabetes is properly collected; to address significant diabetes workforce issues; to ensure tailored mental health support services are in place for those with diabetes who need it; and to ensure investment is made in prevention services to stem the amount of people year on year being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes is one of the fastest growing health crises of our time and it's on the rise. **Over 105,000 people in Northern Ireland are now living with this relentless condition.** Without proper management, diabetes can lead to complications including heart attack, stroke, and amputation. Too often, these are avoidable through better care, early intervention, and prevention.

A fresh Assembly mandate presents an opportunity for political parties to champion making the changes needed to help the health service, help healthcare professionals, and help the growing diabetes population deal with the demands and complexities of this relentless condition.

Here's why:

- **£1,000,000 every day is spent on diabetes-related complications in Northern Ireland** – approximately 10% of total healthcare expenditure. Without intervention, estimates suggest this could rise to 17%
- Prevalence of diabetes in Northern Ireland is rising by approximately **4%** each year
- There are more than **376,000 people at increased risk of type 2 diabetes** in Northern Ireland
- While type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented, approximately **70-80%** of cases of type 2 diabetes can be delayed, prevented, or put into remission
- A Diabetes UK survey last year found the coronavirus pandemic has led to a significant backlog in appointments, with **1 in 4 people with diabetes having an appointment cancelled since March 2020** that has still not taken place; and under half of people with diabetes have not had their crucial HbA1c check since the pandemic either
- Despite a commitment in 2016, there is **still no systematic audit of diabetes** in Northern Ireland to map how many people assess receive important health checks

Help us create a world where diabetes does no harm

- Tell your constituents that you know diabetes is serious and that, if elected, you'll work to secure these changes during the next Assembly mandate.
- Commit to meeting with Diabetes UK Northern Ireland early in the mandate.
- Commit to join the All Party Group on Diabetes in the Assembly when elected.

Get in touch with us at campaigns@diabetes.org.uk