



Tackling The Diabetes Epidemic

Praveen Kaur Gosal, Diabetes Nurse Educator of Diabetic Society of Singapore, enjoyed an eye-opening experience at the recent 20th World Diabetes Congress in Montreal, Canada. She files this report.

The 20th World Diabetes Congress in Montreal, Canada, was an energising five-day event which attracted 12,000 international delegates. Doctors, nurses, health ministers, people with diabetes and many others gathered from 18 to 22 October 2009 to access the latest data and opinion from the scientific community, discuss key issues in diabetes care, and exchange information on how available resources can best be used to tackle the global diabetes problem.

A total of 150 countries exhibited their activities and shared their thinking and practices. Diabetic Society of Singapore, affiliated to the International Diabetes Federation, was privileged to have the opportunity to exhibit our methods of raising the awareness of diabetes and promoting appropriate diabetes care and prevention.

The diabetes mega-congress highlighted the need for increased political action to affect change. Newly published data from the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) showed that some 285 million people live with diabetes today as compared to an estimated 30 million people in 1985. This is over a seven-fold increase in just over 20 years and it will be close to 440 million by 2030.

The complications of diabetes pose as a hindrance to the life of not only an individual with diabetes but also the people around him or her. Diabetes is the main cause of partial vision loss and blindness in adults. It accounts for the majority of limb amputations and people with diabetes are much more likely to have a heart attack, stroke and kidney disease.

Among the abundance of knowledge and updates regarding diabetes, I picked out one main point, which is close to my heart - the importance of health education. With increased access to diabetes education, people with diabetes can play an informed and central role in self-care. Knowledge is crucial for an individual with

diabetes to best manage his or her disease and avoid its devastating complications.

We left the congress appreciating the experience and exchange of knowledge and ideas to help us improve diabetes care among the people with diabetes and those at risk. We returned with a renewed hope that DSS would remain at the forefront of the fight against diabetes; and by providing health education for the public, we are able to stop people from developing diabetes.

Diabetic Society of Singapore believes in providing diabetes awareness, education and counselling to people with diabetes, their family members and the public. Through knowledge and discipline, the person with diabetes becomes better equipped to achieve a healthy and productive life. Through health education, we hope to increase the awareness of diabetes and to ensure that diabetes is detected early.

We also hope to guide the newly diagnosed by equipping them with the knowledge of diabetes and this empowers them to avoid or delay the potentially devastating consequences of the disease.

If you would like to find out more about DSS' Self-Care Management Workshops or make an appointment with our Diabetes Nurse Educators for counselling on diabetes management, please call:

6842 3382 HQ @ Bedok Reservoir Road

6398 0282 Central DECC @ Boon Keng

6564 9818 SHK DECC @ Jurong West

Source: <http://www.idf.org/why-you-should-care>

WHAT'S UP IN 2010 AND BEYOND

Events for 2010	Description	Language	Dates
Healthy Cooking for Chinese New Year	Cooking Demonstration - limited to 30 pax on a first-come-first served basis	English/Mandarin	30 Jan
"From Measurement to Management: Living Well with Diabetes"	Lecture on eating and exercising correctly if you have diabetes. Organised in conjunction with Johnson Medical. Only for users of One-Touch meters.	English	20 Mar
Annual General Meeting (AGM)			17 Apr
Gardenia Bakery Tour cum Talk by Dietitian		English	5 May
"What's so important about Diabetes Self-Care Education and Support & what should I know about about managing my diabetes" - Public Forum on the importance of Diabetes Self-Care Education and Support & Managing Diabetes	Sharing sessions on the importance of diabetes self-care education and support and how to manage and cope with diabetes	English	22 May
"What are the latest developments in diabetes and why do I feel down and confused about Diabetes?" - Public Forum on new developments in diabetes and other psychological and social issues related to diabetes	Lecture on new developments in diabetes and dealing with various psychological and social issues.	English	17 Jul
Eating and Preparing Healthy Hawker Fare	Cooking Demonstration - limited to 30 pax on a first-come, first served basis	English	21 Aug
"Help ! I don't want my Kidneys to FAIL!" - Public Forum on Diabetes & Kidneys	Lecture focusing on understanding how diabetes affects the kidneys and how it leads to kidney failure	English/Mandarin	18 Sept
An Outing organised by DSS		English	26 Sept
World Diabetes Day 2010			14 Nov
Events for 2011	Description	Language	Date
My feet hurt - why? Help me save my legs! Public Forum on Footcare	Lecture on good foot care for those with diabetes in order to minimise amputations	English	TBA

Kindly note that the above dates may change due to unavoidable circumstances. The events and timing will be publicised prior to actual dates.