BCV session in Abu Dhabi

A BCV session was held on December 6, during the IDF Congress in Abu Dhabi. Riva Greenberg (USA), in her quality of moderator, presented the network and the four priorities identified through the first consultation. Each speaker then talked about one of the priorities linking it to her personal experience. Rakiya Kilgori (Nigeria) discussed the difficulties people face when accessing care in some regions and then shared a few ideas on how to involve policymakers to prompt them to improve the situation. Gopika Krishnan (India) focused on the importance of education for people living with diabetes and their entourage while Phyllisa Deroze (UAE) touched upon the need to improve the prevention of type 2 diabetes and adapt it culturally. Finally, Riva discussed the issue of discrimination. The video recording of this session will soon be made available on the BCV website.

VIDEO TESTIMONIES

To increase the visibility of the network and allow the voices of our BCV members to be heard, we have posted several video testimonies on our website. The BCV members who were present in Abu Dhabi had the opportunity to record video testimonies there, which will soon be posted on our website. All BCV members that wish to send us video testimonies are welcome to do so.

CONSULTATIONS

From January to March 2018, IDF will develop small consultations with the BCV network on the topic of WDD 2018, patient empowerment and BCVs’ views on the progress made by the network to date. The report of the third consultation on quality of care will be launched by the end of February.

BCV MEMBERSHIP

The BCV network now comprises over 120 members from 59 different countries. If you want to know if there is a BCV member from your country, we invite you to visit the “Meet the Blue Circle Voices” section of our website.

WEBINARS

During 2018 IDF will organise several educational webinars for the BCV and our other network of people living with diabetes, the Young Leaders in Diabetes. These will cover a range of topics from marketing and communications, advocacy, diabetes education, etc. If you have a proposal for a webinar, we would love to hear about it! Send us an email to bluecirclevoices@idf.org with any suggestion you may have.
On October 19 and 20, the BCV Brazilian team represented by Bruno Helman, Mário Márcio, Sheila Vasconcellos and Vanessa Pirolo, together with 12 other members of different Diabetes Association across the country, took part in the first Meeting related to the Inclusion of New Technologies in the Brazilian Health Care System. The event was organised by the National Commission of Technology Incorporation (CONITEC), which is under the New Technologies Inclusion Department of the Brazilian’s Health Ministry.

It was the first time that the Government had created an initiative of this sort to hold a dialogue with civil society representatives. The delegation had the chance to share knowledge, learn best practices from other diseases, and share opportunities for improvement to enhance CONITEC’s work.

A town hall meeting was held in Katsina on November 25 to discuss diabetes as a silent disease. The Chairman of the Diabetes Association of Nigeria, the Executive Secretary Primary Health Care development agency of Katsina, the General Manager of the Health Service Management Board, medical doctors, dieticians, nurses and diabetes patients attended this meeting. A lecture on the topic “Diabetes in Katsina: an unrecognised epidemic” was given to highlight the plight of diabetes in Nigeria and the need to support people living with diabetes. It offered the opportunity for attendees to ask questions on diabetes and diabetes-related issues.

Aisha was also interviewed for a national daily newspaper, in which she called for the national government to provide free medicines for people living with diabetes. This call was relayed by ten national daily newspapers. The interview can be accessed here.
On World Diabetes Day (WDD), Liliana and her association CUI.D.AR organised various events in Buenos Aires to raise awareness and educate the general population about diabetes. The first one was a one-day camp for children and adolescents living with diabetes, during which they shared tips, knowledge about diabetes and their personal experience. More than 300 families attended the camp organised in Buenos Aires. CUI.D.AR also managed to set up a giant television screen at the corner of two of the most frequented streets (9 de Julio and Corrientes) which every two minutes broadcasted information about type 1 diabetes. This had a great impact as thousands of people walking by could see this screen.

Shivani Arora (India)

On WDD, Shivani with her association diwwaas (an association dedicated to promoting awareness of diabetes in women) organised a one-day conference in Chennai. This conference was open to all those interested, and was promoted prior to the event on local news to reach a wide audience. The day started with sessions of yoga, fitness and diet to highlight the importance of healthy living, which was then followed by a formal inauguration, a main panel discussion and then discussions with six different target groups (high school and college girls; young working women; women with diabetes; pregnant women; home makers and carers). Each target group had a specific panel discussion tailored to their specific needs. During this conference, the social media campaign run by Shivani “#BeFree of #diabetes” was launched.

Weronika Kowalska (Poland)

Weronika was invited to write articles about her life with diabetes for two of the most renowned online Polish campaigns that are conducted every year for World Diabetes Day. The How to live with diabetes and Life with diabetes campaigns were promoted online and in the national newspaper Rzeczpospolita. Those campaigns focused on giving a voice to patients living with diabetes. In the article for How to live with diabetes, Weronika wrote about diabetes as a life challenge, which has to be tackled sometimes with difficulty, but that does not prevent her from enjoying life and reaching personal goals. In the article for Life with diabetes, she wrote about diabetes as a ‘universal language’ for people living with it, and how to understand each other and unite for a common cause even if we are from different countries.
Pablo Da Silva (Brazil)

In view of World Diabetes Day, Pablo participated in several events throughout the month of November, which aimed at raising awareness of diabetes and discuss life with diabetes. During an event organised by the magazine “Em Diabetes” and the Maracanã Tour, Pablo participated in presentations on diabetes, its consequences and life with diabetes, alongside journalists, other BCV members and doctors. Following the presentations, the participants created a human blue circle to give visibility to their event. During the World Diabetes Day event organised by the municipality of Nova Friburgo, Pablo participated in TV and radio interviews during which he talked about the responsibilities linked to living with diabetes and striving to be a voice for all people living with diabetes. He also discussed the attention given to diabetes in Brazil.

Melanie Stephenson (UK)

In order to raise awareness of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes on WDD, and to discuss this year’s theme “Our right to a healthy future”, Melanie and her team decided to run to 22 different General Practitioner surgeries around Cardiff, covering a distance of 20 km. At each surgery, they spoke to doctors, nurses and administrators to discuss the symptoms of diabetes and to deliver an informational pack on a series of videos that have been produced by Pocket Medic Films to give necessary information on diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and to reiterate the importance of physical activity. These videos can be recommended to patients to give additional information on their condition and to raise their awareness about healthy living. This event was covered on the BBC Wales news, giving it additional coverage and it also received a lot of support on social media.

Delphine Arduini (France)

Over the past year, Delphine (in partnership with the Sanofi Diabetes Team) has developed a comic called “My Life with Him”, which was launched on World Diabetes Day. This comic’s goal is to illustrate what living with diabetes is on a daily basis. This comic is available in both English and French and can be downloaded [here](#).
Deric Formbuh Nkimbeng (Cameroon)

In his capacity as a schoolteacher, Deric Formbuh discussed diabetes with his students. During the week before World Diabetes Day, each day he spent the last 10 minutes of his classes with children aged between 10 and 15 years old speaking about diabetes: what it is, what causes it, what are the signs and symptoms, the different treatments and the complications that can occur as a result of the disease. His aim was to put an end to the myth that diabetes is the result of witchcraft and does not have a treatment, and that people living with diabetes will end up dying. Raising awareness on diabetes from an early age can prevent this myth spreading among the population.

Carol Hendricks (South Africa)

In August 2017 Carol set up a support group named the Mitchell’s Plain Diabetes Support Group. Every second Wednesday and Thursday, a group ranging from 20 to 50 attendees meet to take their blood pressure and measure their blood glucose. As most of the people attending this support group only get tested every six months at the Day Hospital and not all of them own meters to test themselves, it provides them with a place to regularly check their levels.

In November, the support group held a Diabetes Awareness Day during which they invited the members of seniors’ clubs to be tested. This screening was very useful as a few people were diagnosed with high glucose levels and referred to the Day Hospital.
During the summer of 2017, Gabriel – in cooperation with the Fundación Diabetes Juvenil Ecuador - organised a five-day camp for 72 children and adolescents living with type 1 diabetes. Focused on the theme of the animation film “Moana”, the children participated in fun activities such as sport, art, treasure hunts and dances while also learning how to better manage their diabetes. The objective of the camp was to give the tools children need to live a full life, while also teaching them how to care for their diabetes. Surrounded by specialised doctors, psychologists and nutritionists, the attendees were given an adequate and safe environment to learn more about diabetes management, make friends and have fun.

In parallel, Gabriel and his Association took the opportunity to update and obtain information on the health status of the camp attendees, in order to better map out the type 1 diabetes community in the country and establish strategies to improve the quality of care and influence public policies regarding diabetes care.

Gabriel Molineros (Ecuador)

In November, Marwa, in her quality of Vice-Chairman of the Diabetic Youth Care Association (D.Y.C.A), organised two days of activities in Cairo for children to celebrate WDD, which she named “Diabetes Champion Day”. Some 120 children between 3 and 15 years old and living with type 1 diabetes participated in the activities proposed during those two days. The first part of the day always consisted of a question and answer session between doctors, children and their parents. Pictures were taken with the blue circle and other frames. Afterwards, HbA1c levels were tested and then games helping children to learn more about diabetes were conducted.

Marwa Mohammed (Egypt)
On World Diabetes Day, Basem Futa organised an educational and recreational event for children in Al-Khobar, which was attended by 500 children with type 1 diabetes and their families. The theme of the event was “Let’s keep it controlled”, referring to its aim: encourage children living with diabetes to adopt healthy lifestyles, eat well-balanced meals, be physically active and learn how to self-manage and control their diabetes. During this event, children and their parents were taught how to make healthy snacks for schools, what to put on their grocery shopping list, how to ensure proper dental care and learn how to inject insulin. These activities were organised in a way that allowed children to be engaged and to actively participate in their own self-care.

Shehu Abdulkadir Musa (Nigeria)

On October 7, Shehu organised a lecture on podiatry and the importance of preventing foot diseases at the University Teaching Hospital in the Bauchi state of Nigeria. Holding a lecture on podiatry was essential to create awareness about the necessity to have regular foot examinations. This lecture was recorded and aired on a community radio to promote the message among people living in rural areas.

Basem Futa (Saudi Arabia)

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On the occasion of World Walking Day, which took place on October 1, Basem also organised a walking event, which was attended by hundreds of participants. The purpose of this event was to encourage people to integrate walking into their routine, to ensure a daily dose of physical activity. Participants walked 5km during a period of one hour, during which water bottles and juices were made available and blood sugar levels were tested. The benefits of walking were highlighted throughout the event, and it had a huge impact on the participants as some of the companies’ directors which participated in the event decided to set up walking clubs in their companies for their employees and families.
Phyllisa Deroze (United Arab Emirates)

In March 2017, Phyllisa volunteered to collaborate with the Imperial College London Diabetes Centre (ICLDC) - Al Ain Branch, to establish a monthly support group for women living with diabetes and women caring for children living with diabetes in Al Ain. Believing that the local community could benefit from the positive impact of face-to-face support group sessions, similar to what she enjoyed in America before moving to the UAE in 2013, she decided to organise a support group where she resides. This joint venture with ICLDC is called “Sukkar” (Arabic for Sugar) and it is a bilingual support group (English and Arabic) that combines expert advice from clinicians with peer-to-peer conversations led by Phyllisa. The support group meets monthly.

Anna Norton (United States)

From October 13-15, the DiabetesSisters’ leaders and members gathered for their Leadership Institute and Weekend for the Women Conference Series in Alexandria. The three days were designed to offer additional training to women who lead peer support groups throughout the United States, as well as education and support for women living with diabetes. Educational sessions included topics such as pregnancy, intimacy and communication. Speakers discussed nutrition, exercise and eating disorders in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

Heather Koga (Zimbabwe)

During a one-day youth camp organised by the Diabetics Association of Zimbabwe on September 16, Heather was invited to make a presentation on the importance of rotating insulin injection sites. The purpose of this presentation, and of the whole camp, was to bring together youths to share experience and tips on diabetes management in a safe environment. Through discussing these topics freely, the attendees were able to gain insights and to feel more empowered to manage their diabetes.
The 10th International Diabetes Congress took place in Belgrade (Serbia) on November 19-22. The IDF Europe Regional-Chair, Dr Sehnaz Karadeniz, was a special guest during this Congress. She presented IDF’s work and gave lectures to professionals and patients. Stela was also a speaker during this Congress and was able to share her experience, as well as present the BCV network and its objectives.
NEWS FROM IDF

IDF CONGRESS 2017

The 2017 IDF Congress in Abu Dhabi (UAE) took place between December 4-8. Professionals in the field of diabetes, public health specialists, policy makers and advocates were able to attend scientific sessions on the latest developments in diabetes clinical practice, management, education, prevalence and public health issues. With over 160 hours of sessions, 330 top-level speakers, 1,000 posters and a record 25 CME credits, the IDF 2017 programme provided delegates with an invaluable learning experience through varied and innovative sessions.

UN HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON NCDS

IDF has recently launched a global call to action ahead of the High Level Meeting on NCDs that will likely take place in September 2018. We encourage all BCV members to use the toolkit created for this occasion to join this call and develop their own national campaigns. Follow this link to download the toolkit and join IDF’s campaign. We would like to thank all the BCV members that have already joined this call and approached their national policy-makers to discuss the state of NCDs in their region.

THE NEW IDF BOARD – 2018-2019

The Board of Directors - the IDF elected management body whose main role is to serve the IDF General Assembly to ensure the proper functioning of the organisation – was renewed during the IDF Abu Dhabi Congress. Professor Nam H Cho became the new IDF President, replacing Dr Shaukat Sadikot, and Prof Andrew Boulton was elected as President-elect 2018-2019. You can check the composition of the new IDF Board here.

IDF SURVEY

In cooperation with Novo Nordisk - has launched Taking Diabetes to Heart, a project on cardiovascular disease (CVD) awareness and knowledge in people living with type 2 diabetes. The main activity of this project is a survey, whose results will support the development of tools, educational resources and policies designed to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations included in IDF’s global report on Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease. This online survey is available in multiple languages and can be accessed here. We encourage BCV members to take this survey if they are living with type 2 diabetes and to promote it among their network.
The 8th edition of the IDF Diabetes Atlas was launched on November 14, 2017. It contains the latest figures on the state of diabetes in the world. This Atlas is a great advocacy resource for all BCV members, as it allows them to illustrate arguments with the most recent and accurate diabetes figures. You can download the Atlas in Arabic, English, French and Spanish [here](#).

**IDF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DIABETES DURING DISASTERS**

This document aims at providing assistance and guidance to national diabetes association and all members to develop their own diabetes management plan so as to ensure that no-one will lack insulin and appropriate care during a disaster. It also encompasses tools for local health systems and people living with diabetes to prepare themselves for disasters. These recommendations (available in many languages) can be downloaded [here](#).

**LIVE YOUR LIFE IN STYLE**

Live your life in style: Diet and physical activity are two key components of diabetes management. IDF has just released a book called “Live your life in style” which includes physical exercises and recipes from around the world that have been adapted to be healthier. The aim of this book is to show that throughout a day, you can exercise in various ways and that diabetes does not limit the number of recipes you can cook. This book can be downloaded [here](#) (available only in English).