The European Region of the International Diabetes Federation calls for improved funding and training for nurses as key players in resilient health systems

NOVEMBER 14, 2020: This World Diabetes Day, the European Chapter of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF Europe) is calling for more training and a better recognition of nurses

How extraordinary it is that the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, is celebrated on the year of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her key nursing values – including regularly washing hands and maintaining good hygiene – and her pioneering work in statistics and data collection have proven more relevant than ever.

Since the beginning of 2020, more than 12.5 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported in Europe1 and in 2019 close to 60 million people in Europe were living with diabetesii. The interaction between these two devastating pandemics carries a heavy burden for people living with diabetes who are at higher risk of severe clinical outcomes of COVID-19. It also highlights the need for a systemic transformation of our healthcare systems to ensure equitable access and support for quality diabetes care across Europe.

Today, on World Diabetes Day, IDF Europe would like to pay tribute to all healthcare professionals who are on the frontline and to celebrate the nurses who represent a vital force for change that the system needs.

Nurses play a key role in supporting the optimal management of diabetes and the delivery of personalised diabetes care, in providing self-management training and psychological support for people living with diabetes as well as in educating people on the modifiable risk factors for type 2 diabetes and how to lower the risks of developing the condition.

Commenting on the role of nurses, IDF Europe Chair, Dr Niti Pall said: “For many people living with diabetes the need for a trusted advocate, professional friend allows for a better experience and outcome of diabetes care. Many of us will have stories to tell about this vital role that nurses will have played in the individual diabetes journey. We pay homage to them in this international year of the nurse and ask for policy makers across Europe to recognise this role, invest in training and development of this vital resource and make it mandatory for health systems to show that progress is being made to incorporate multidisciplinary teams at the heart of delivery of diabetes care.”

ENDS
Notes to Editors

Supporting diabetes facts and figures in Europe (as defined by WHO)
- 1 in 11 adults have diabetes\textsuperscript{i}
- Close to 60 million people have diabetes. This figure is expected to rise to 66 million by 2030\textsuperscript{ii}. (For country figures, please see the attached fact sheet).
- Over a third (41%) of people with diabetes have not been diagnosed and are at higher risks of developing harmful and costly complications\textsuperscript{v}
- Europe has one of the largest numbers of children and adolescents (0-19) with type 1 diabetes in the world (around 300,000) and the highest number of new cases every year (31,100), with incidence at its highest in Finland, Sweden, and Norway\textsuperscript{vi}
- 1 in 3 (31%) of diabetes-related deaths are in people under the age of 60 years\textsuperscript{vii}
- One in five live births are affected by hyperglycemia in pregnancy\textsuperscript{viii}
- In 2019, total diabetes-related expenditure in Europe stood at €147.9 billion\textsuperscript{ix}
- People living with type 2 diabetes have a life expectancy up to 10 years shorter than people not living with the disease, and the gap may be even larger for people living with type 1 diabetes\textsuperscript{x}

IDF Europe will be holding a Webinar on the Role of the Nurse on November 17\textsuperscript{th}, at 9.30 CET, that will also present the highlights of the results of the first pan-European survey of the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of people living with diabetes.
Registration is available at https://bit.ly/34W22tR

About the International Diabetes Federation
IDF Europe is the European chapter of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF). We are an umbrella organization representing 70 national diabetes organisations in 44 countries across Europe, representing both people living with diabetes and healthcare professionals.
www.idf-europe.org

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\textsuperscript{x} https://www.diabetes.co.uk/diabetes-life-expectancy.html