
GUIDELINES

FOR THE

DEVELOPMENT

OF A

NATIONAL PROGRAMME

FOR

DIABETES MELLITUS

Prepared by
Gayle E. Reiber, Ph.D.
University of North Carolina Charlotte
Charlotte, NC 28223, USA
and
Hilary King, M.D., D.Sc.
Diabetes and Other Noncommunicable Diseases Unit
World Health Organization
1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland



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Division of Noncommunicable
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Foreword

There is no doubt that diabetes mellitus is becoming an increasingly important public health problem in all countries. For this reason, a resolution on prevention and control of diabetes mellitus, adopted by the World Health Assembly in 1989 (WHA 42.36), invited all WHO Member States:

- 1) to assess the national importance of diabetes;
- 2) to implement population-based measures, appropriate to the local situation, to prevent and control diabetes;
- 3) to share with other Member States opportunities for training and further education in the clinical and public health aspects of diabetes;
- 4) to establish a model for the integrated approach to the prevention and control of diabetes at community level.

According to the 8th General Programme of Work for 1990–1995, the World Health Organization should develop and apply national programmes on diabetes mellitus in selected Member States from all WHO regions. These programmes could cover the whole country or especially for those countries with a decentralized health care system, could be limited to the local level (district, community, etc.).

In order to develop national/local disease prevention and control programmes, the following conditions are necessary:

- a) the understanding and support of national/local policy makers, and national and international organizations;
- b) resources;
- c) multidisciplinary and multisectoral teams responsible for national/local programme development;
- d) guidelines for the development of programmes for diabetes mellitus.

Together with its Regional Offices, the International Diabetes Federation and 28 WHO collaborating centres in the field of diabetes, the Division of Noncommunicable Diseases and Health Technology of WHO Headquarters is developing components of diabetes prevention and control programmes – research, education, experimental testing and evaluation. These global guidelines have been prepared by Dr. G. Reiber (University of North Carolina Charlotte, USA), and Dr. H. King (Division of

Noncommunicable Diseases and Health Technology, WHO, Geneva).
They will be used for developing regional, national and local programmes
in response to the aforementioned resolution.

Dr. E. N. Chigan
Director
Division of Noncommunicable
Diseases and Health Technology

Preface

The primary aim of these guidelines is to outline steps which may be taken to determine the national importance of diabetes and to assist health officials, health planners, health service administrators and diabetes professionals develop diabetes policies and programmes. Though this document emphasizes national diabetes programme development, the principles and strategies outlined can be applied similarly in provincial and local settings. Also, the general principles described may be applied to health programme development for other diseases. These guidelines may be too complex for some circumstances whilst too simple for others. Therefore, this document should serve only as a guide to planning and evaluating diabetes programmes, from which individual planners can abstract material relevant to their unique health situation and cultural, political, and economic environment.

Each section concludes with a synopsis of the content. The reader may find it helpful to work through these summaries first, in order to become familiar with the general planning concepts, before attempting detailed study of the main text. Terms are defined in the glossary and a programme outline is provided in conclusion. Regardless of the extent of a national, provincial or local diabetes problem, a careful review of the status of diabetes in the current health plan may permit diabetes to be accorded appropriate emphasis and resource allocation.

A further edition of the guidelines may appear at a later date. The authors invite comments and suggestions from readers whose experience developing programmes for diabetes mellitus may benefit others.

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