

MEDIA RELEASE

Attn: Newsdesks
Health correspondents

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CONFERENCE SEES LAUNCH OF SCOTLAND'S MOST COMPREHENSIVE GUIDELINE ON DIABETES

Today (Tuesday 23rd March) sees the publication of the most comprehensive guideline on diabetes ever produced in Scotland.

The guideline from the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) – part of NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS) – provides recommendations based on current evidence for best practice in the management of diabetes.

Key aspects of the guideline include recommendations on:

- Lifestyle interventions for people with type 1 and type 2 diabetes
- Managing psychosocial issues in people with diabetes
- Managing type 1 diabetes
- Glucose-lowering therapies in people with type 2 diabetes
- Managing cardiovascular, kidney and foot diseases in people with diabetes
- Preventing visual impairment in people with diabetes
- Managing type 1, type 2 and gestational diabetes during pregnancy.

The guideline, which is aimed at all healthcare professionals working with people with diabetes, will be launched at the *Diabetes in Scotland Conference, Diabetes 2010 and Beyond: knowledge into practice* at the Edinburgh Conference Centre, Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh on Tuesday 23rd March.

In addition to the guideline for healthcare professionals, a summary quick reference guide will also be published, and a version specially written for people with diabetes, to help them understand the treatments they can expect from NHSScotland.

Details of the Scottish Diabetes Group's forthcoming Scottish Diabetes Action Plan will also be announced at the Conference. This Plan sets out the Group's strategy for tackling the increasing problem of diabetes in Scotland and was developed in close collaboration with the guideline, ensuring a joined up resource for NHS staff.

Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon said: “The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that people with diabetes get the best possible care, and we welcome the publication of new SIGN Guideline on the Management of Diabetes today.

“These recommendations complement the Diabetes Action Plan, published later this year, which will bring real benefits to people living with diabetes.”

Dr John McKnight, Chair of the guideline steering group, and Consultant Physician at the Diabetes Unit, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, said: “Diabetes is a major health problem in Scotland and throughout the world. With an ageing population, increasing obesity, and increasing survival rates of those with diabetes, it is becoming increasingly prevalent. This comprehensive guideline incorporates the latest evidence on how best to manage diabetes and will prove an invaluable tool for NHSScotland in improving services, ensuring we remain at the forefront in the treatment of this condition.”

Jane-Claire Judson, National Director of Diabetes UK Scotland added: “The new SIGN Guideline will hopefully focus services on best clinical practice and the latest Scottish Diabetes Survey will illustrate the scale of the diabetes challenge in Scotland. The Government’s revised Action Plan will, we hope, be the driver for improvement across the country. However, it is the voice of people living with diabetes which really matters in making the right changes and working towards truly person-centred care”.

Editors Note:

- SIGN (Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network) develops national clinical guidelines aimed at reducing variations in clinical practice and in outcomes for patients. Founded in 1993, SIGN became part of the national clinical effectiveness body, NHS Quality Improvement Scotland, on 1 January 2005.
- Diabetes is a major cause of morbidity and mortality in Scotland and worldwide, with an increasing prevalence. In 2009 there were around 228,000 people registered as having diabetes in Scotland, an increase of 3.6% from the preceding year.
- Around 100 healthcare professionals, patients and SIGN staff were involved in creating the guideline over a period of around 2 years and nearly 2000 pieces of evidence were reviewed.
- NHS QIS is a Special Health Board that provides support to NHSScotland. We translate the latest scientific research, expert opinion and patient experience to help improve the quality of healthcare in Scotland. Key components of our organisation are: The Healthcare Environment Inspectorate, Scottish Health Council, and the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN). We also

take a lead role in co-ordinating the work of the Scottish Patient Safety Programme and provide support to the Scottish Medicines Consortium.

- Type 1 diabetes happens when the cells in the body that produce insulin are destroyed by the body's immune system. Without insulin, high levels of glucose stay in the blood, so the main treatment for type 1 diabetes is regular insulin injections.
- Type 2 diabetes is when the body does not make enough insulin to deal with glucose from an individual's diet or their body is not using insulin properly. Type 2 diabetes usually develops in middle-aged or older adults, but it is becoming more common in younger people due to their lifestyles. It is also more common in ethnic-minority groups. It is usually managed with various treatments including changing your lifestyle.
- Some women can develop diabetes during pregnancy, known as gestational diabetes. Some women have high levels of glucose in their blood because their bodies do not make enough insulin to deal with the extra demands of pregnancy. It usually disappears after the birth, but women with gestational diabetes will have to be monitored to make sure they do not develop type 2 diabetes later in life.
- SIGN guidelines are available from www.sign.ac.uk.

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