

# IDF World Diabetes Congress 2013

## Introduction

The IDF has been a guiding light for the worldwide diabetes community since the 1950s, promoting excellence in diabetes care and diabetes prevention, and working towards a cure for this debilitating condition. The Federation is engaged in numerous global and local activities throughout its seven regions: raising public awareness of diabetes, and influencing policy both nationally and internationally. More information on these varied events can be viewed at [www.idf.org](http://www.idf.org).

We report here now on one increasingly important global IDF initiative – the biennial IDF World Diabetes Congress – the most recent of which was held in Melbourne, Australia, on 2–6 December 2013. This truly universal event brings together the latest research, knowledge and best practices in both diabetes prevention and management, showcasing the enormous commitment of IDF members, their local group affiliations, and the universal diabetes fraternity.

## Programme overview

Over 3.5 days, the congress provided 400 speakers and 275 hours of innovative and interactive scientific sessions. There were seven key streams in the congress which included two new themes: ‘A historical perspective of diabetes research in the 20th century’ and ‘Diabetes in indigenous people’. Highlights from the conference included IDF Award Lectures on ‘Understanding the pathogenesis of type 1 diabetes’ (Nerup: Denmark) and ‘Understanding the burden of diabetes in indigenous peoples’ (Brown: Australia).

There were many discussions on diabetes in the ‘real world’ with regard to the implementation of

diabetes guidelines, education, affordability of diabetes drugs and nutrition; and also discussions concerning the obesity epidemic and proposed solutions. Historical perspectives such as ‘Insulin therapy 1921–2013’ (Skyler: USA) and ‘Diabetes monitoring’ (Alberti: UK) demonstrated the need for young scientists and researchers to fully understand past discoveries within the realm of basic clinical science and treatments. At the other end of the conference spectrum, presentations from the Education and Integrated Care stream engaged many delegates with ‘Innovative approaches to engaging people with diabetes’ such as ‘The arts and disease’ (Assal: Switzerland) and ‘Self-management support: empowerment and motivational interviewing’ (Funnel: USA). Reports from the DAWN 2 study (Peyrot: USA) and the latest publication of the *IDF Diabetes Atlas* were also announced at the conference.

Other IDF highlights at the event included presentations on: ‘Public health and epidemiology’ (Wareham: UK); ‘Living with diabetes’ (Akram: Pakistan); and ‘Global challenges in health’ (Mbanaya: Africa). Personal views on how people live with diabetes were visualised at the film programme in the Diabetes Café, and young people were particularly epitomised in the Young Leaders in Diabetes Symposium.

## Passion and more...

It is difficult for any report to judge exactly why this IDF Congress has grown in importance and in attendance. There is the enormous enthusiasm of Sir Michael Hirst, current President of the IDF, and the chairs of the Organising Committee (Anne-Marie Felton), Programme

## Organising committee of the IDF

- **Chair:** Anne-Marie Felton (United Kingdom)
- Paul Zimmet (Australia)
- Trisha Dunning (Australia)
- Pablo Aschner (Colombia)
- Anne Bethune Belton (Canada)
- John Grumitt (United Kingdom)
- Mike Jones (Bermuda)
- Sonia Kakar (India)
- Kaushik Ramaiya (Tanzania)
- Nam Han Cho (Korea)
- Alex Silverstein (United Kingdom)

Committee (Paul Zimmet) and National Advisory Committee (Trish Dunning). There is the wealth of first-class speakers and workshops and the networking in the global village and social programme with its respectful approach to the culture of the host country. The IDF promotes partnerships across the globe. There is a feeling of inclusivity at this congress for everyone present. Whether your interests are in diabetes prevention, type 1 diabetes in the young, or type 2 in older patients, diabetes complications, epidemiology, psychology, basic science, historical perspectives – this congress offers something for the absolute beginner to the consummate diabetes expert. However, more than anything the congress offers a passion – a passion to place the global diabetes pandemic on the world stage; and for all present to be part of the solution. If you missed this conference, book now for your place in Toronto 2015 and be part of the IDF initiative to help prevent diabetes and improve the health of those living with this condition.

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