

driving **change** to defeat

diabetes

# rethinking the diabetes challenge

**At Novo Nordisk, we are driven by a core belief: that the alarming rise of diabetes is not inevitable. We can change its trajectory – and we must act now.**

Today, 415 million people – around 9% of the world's adult population – live with diabetes, the majority with type 2 diabetes.<sup>1</sup> The number has doubled since 2000 and is expected to reach 642 million by 2040.<sup>1</sup> What is behind this seemingly unstoppable rise? And why are type 2 diabetes rates growing so rapidly in cities, home to two-thirds of all people with diabetes?<sup>1</sup>

It is time to rethink the diabetes challenge. We know that unhealthy diets, inactive lifestyles and obesity are risk factors for type 2 diabetes, but we have recently

**W**e work for a future where fewer people develop diabetes, where everyone with diabetes is diagnosed, where everyone diagnosed is treated, and where everyone treated gets the best outcome.

**LARS REBIEN SØRENSEN**  
Chief Executive Officer, Novo Nordisk

discovered that the problem is far more complex. There are many other factors that determine an individual's risk of diabetes, as well as their likelihood of being diagnosed in good time and achieving a positive outcome. This complexity demands a renewed strategy.

More than 90 years of diabetes leadership has taught us that curbing the pandemic requires an extraordinary focus where the needs are greatest. We must ensure people are diagnosed earlier, improve diabetes care and tackle the rise of diabetes in cities.

This is how we will drive change to defeat diabetes.

## our focused strategy

- Ensure people with diabetes are diagnosed earlier
- Ensure better diabetes care
- Tackle the rise of diabetes in cities

**to break the 'Rule of Halves'<sup>2</sup> we need to drive change where the needs are greatest**

Of the estimated 415 million people with diabetes...



about 50% are diagnosed...

of whom about 50% receive care...

of whom about 50% achieve treatment targets...

of whom about 50% achieve desired outcomes, meaning that only around 6% of people with diabetes live a life free from diabetes-related complications.

The 'Rule of Halves' illustrates the global diabetes situation. Actual rates of diagnosis, treatment, targets and outcomes vary in different countries.

## LONDON

Cities attract people, but living in an urban area can also mean a greater risk of developing type 2 diabetes.



# one of 193 million reasons to address diabetes earlier

Timing is crucial for people with undetected diabetes – earlier diagnosis saves lives.

**W** My father had diabetes, so when I started experiencing the symptoms, I visited my doctor. It's better to know – if it's not managed well it can progress.

**HUW BEVAN**  
Huw has type 2 diabetes



## million people have diabetes<sup>1</sup>

Of the 415 million people with diabetes an estimated 193 million are undiagnosed and risk developing serious complications, including damage to the eyes, kidneys and heart.<sup>1</sup> Half will have at least one complication by the time they are diagnosed.<sup>3</sup> The unbearable burden on individuals, families and health systems can and must be reduced.

Earlier diagnosis helps people get in control of their diabetes sooner and avoid complications. But the opportunity can be lost when people do not know their risk and do not recognise the symptoms. Together with global health organisations we drive awareness and free screening initiatives that reach millions of people with a simple message:

Being overweight, having an unhealthy lifestyle, or a family history of diabetes increase the risk of type 2 diabetes. Getting screened is a first step towards a healthier life.

Beyond public awareness, more healthcare professionals must be educated about the benefits of earlier diagnosis. We must continue building evidence that screening based on risk factors is an effective way to reduce debilitating and costly complications. Since 2005, Novo Nordisk has engaged policymakers at more than 50 roundtables in over 40 countries to elevate earlier diabetes diagnosis on the health agenda. Yet the pandemic is rising in almost every country. We must do more to turn the tide.



# changing diabetes – one person at a time

There is no doubt – better diabetes  
care leads to healthier, longer lives.

Managing diabetes well and getting the right support can help people with the condition live active lives with fewer limitations. So why do around half of those treated for diabetes still struggle to manage their blood sugar – and face serious health complications as a result?<sup>1</sup>

*I've only ever wanted to be a pro cyclist. Just because you have diabetes doesn't mean you have to give up.*


**DAVID LOZANO**  
David has type 1 diabetes and is a professional cyclist with Team Novo Nordisk

Decades of research shows us that the burden of living with diabetes is much more complex than blood sugar levels. It affects every aspect of daily life. Finding it hard to make treatment part of a routine, worrying about hypoglycaemia, or having difficulty explaining concerns to a doctor can all negatively impact a person's quality of life – as well as the ability to manage their condition.<sup>4</sup>

Insights like these have given us a deep understanding of what it takes to drive change – one person at a time. It takes innovative treatment options that can be tailored to individual needs, as well as education and support to overcome the barriers to good self-management. By building strong partnerships with healthcare professionals, researchers and patient organisations, we can help more people on their journey to live well with diabetes.







*Understanding the social and cultural factors that shape what is feasible and desirable for people in urban environments is critical to understanding diabetes and how we address it.*

PROFESSOR DAVID NAPIER  
University College London

# changing diabetes – one **city** at a time

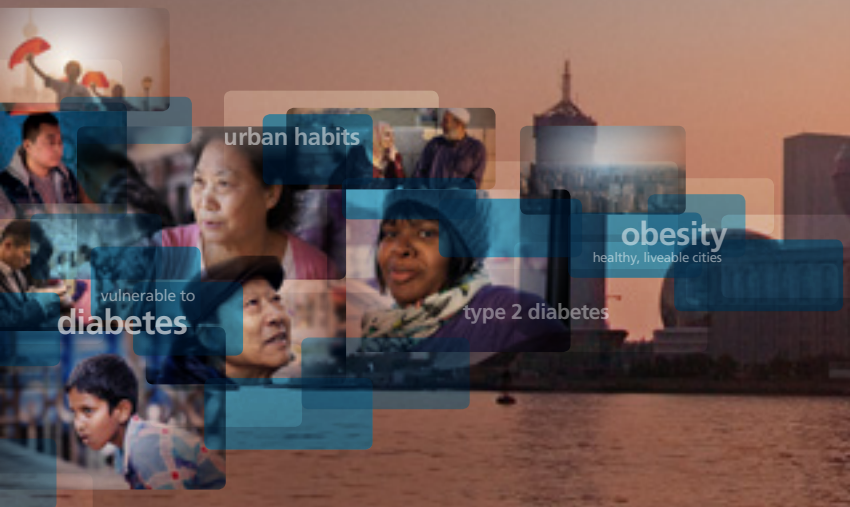
**Cities are the frontline in the fight against diabetes.**

The rise of type 2 diabetes is a global emergency. Action must be scaled up where the need is greatest. Today, more than half the world's population lives in urban areas, including two-thirds of all people with diabetes.<sup>1,5</sup> This makes cities a focal point for driving change.

Urban living is causing an alarming rise in obesity and type 2 diabetes. But what exactly makes city-dwellers more vulnerable to these diseases is a complex issue. New research shows that social and cultural factors play a more important role than previously understood.<sup>6</sup> If we are serious about defeating diabetes, we must embrace this complexity and put our resources and imagination to work in new ways.

Since 2013, as part of the Cities Changing Diabetes programme, we have collaborated in a unique public-private partnership with University College London and five study cities – Mexico City, Houston, Copenhagen, Tianjin and Shanghai – to map the urban diabetes challenge. Our next task is to use the findings to drive local actions and put diabetes on the agenda of those who design and manage cities.

No organisation can do this alone. Success depends on our ability to build a global coalition of businesses, academics, city leaders, healthcare professionals and communities around a common cause – making cities healthier.





# changing diabetes is a partnership effort

The scale and complexity of the diabetes challenge demands a partnership approach.

We supply close to half the world's insulin<sup>7</sup> and we are a large investor in diabetes research, including the search for a cure. Yet, diabetes remains one of the major health challenges of our time – and the crisis is growing. Our determination to defeat diabetes will never fail, but we do not underestimate the task ahead. It is daunting.

The scale and complexity of the challenge is beyond any one organisation, company or discipline. Only through partnerships – with healthcare professionals, patients, policymakers,

academics, and non-governmental organisations – can we hope to make a real and sustainable impact. Together we must sound a wake up call to address this emergency in slow motion. We need to stop diabetes having a negative impact on the lives of people with diabetes, their families, and the communities in which they live.

Our Changing Diabetes® commitment will focus our efforts where the needs are greatest. We will ensure earlier diagnosis and better care so that people with diabetes can live their lives with as few limitations as possible. The work we have started in cities will also bring together new partners and perspectives to tackle the pandemic where it is growing fastest.

Through these actions, through partnerships, we will continue driving change to defeat diabetes with one unflinching belief: it can be done.

*If we cure or prevent the rise of diabetes, and it destroys a large part of our business, we can be proud. We'd have worked together on the greatest social service of any healthcare company, and that would be a phenomenal thing.*

**LARS REBIEN SØRENSEN**  
Chief Executive Officer, Novo Nordisk

prevent complications

collaborative action

support family

empowered

awareness self-management

quality of life overcoming barriers

healthy, liveable cities

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For more than 90 years Novo Nordisk has been changing diabetes. Our key contribution is to discover and develop better biological medicines, manufacture them to meet increasing global demand and make them accessible wherever they are needed. But we need to do more. Our Changing Diabetes® commitment addresses the largest unmet needs in diabetes, ensuring that people are diagnosed early and those diagnosed receive better care. Our actions focus on urban areas where two-thirds of people with diabetes live today. As a global leader in diabetes care we will continue to drive change to defeat diabetes with an unflinching belief that it can be done.

Discover more about Changing Diabetes® at [novonordisk.com/changingdiabetes](https://novonordisk.com/changingdiabetes)

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