A new global initiative offers digital support to health workers, enabling quality diabetes care for patients in low- and middle-income countries

The ‘Diabetes Compass’ is initiated by the World Diabetes Foundation and funded by a 100 million DKK donation by Novo Nordisk A/S and the Novo Nordisk Foundation, helping healthcare workers in low- and middle-income countries to deliver the right diabetes care at the right time.

Denmark, 19 April 2021 –

More than 350 million people in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) live with diabetes. 77% of these do not receive adequate care. The rise in people living with diabetes is putting immense pressure on healthcare professionals (HCPs) and healthcare systems where resources are scarce.

With a timely diagnosis and proper treatment, diabetes is typically a manageable disease. Yet many HCPs in LMICs lack sufficient skills and resources to prevent, diagnose and treat diabetes.

To address this urgent need, Novo Nordisk A/S and the Novo Nordisk Foundation are making a joint donation of DKK 100 million (USD ~16 million) to the World Diabetes Foundation to kickstart a new global initiative – the Diabetes Compass.

The Diabetes Compass initiative aims to improve the quality of diabetes care in LMICs by providing free, simple digital resources to enable HCPs to perform everyday tasks and overcome challenges when managing diabetes.

The Diabetes Compass is an innovative approach to developing the capability of community and primary level HCPs in LMICs. It will use technology to anticipate HCP learning needs and help them provide personalised care to their patients. While the Diabetes Compass is a global initiative, it is developed and implemented with and for local partners, ensuring that specific needs on the ground are met. The digital resources and tools will be developed jointly with the users based on an understanding of their lived experiences and local realities.

Doris Macharia, senior clinical officer at Embu Level 5 Hospital’s Diabetic Clinic in Kenya, has a daughter diagnosed with diabetes. “When she was undergoing treatment, I saw that she was not getting the right care. That drove me to wanting to know more about diabetes and how I can assist people with the disease. I would really appreciate to use digital
tools to diagnose, manage and follow up with our diabetes patients,” says Doris Macharia.

In 1921, the discovery of insulin revolutionised the treatment of diabetes. Today, technology is driving change in health care.

"With the Diabetes Compass, we want to focus on providing healthcare professionals with accessible digital tools relevant to their everyday practice. Catering to local environments and considering healthcare professionals as partners, not as students, will be imperative. We are grateful to Novo Nordisk A/S and the Novo Nordisk Foundation for the donation and opportunity to embark on this journey to improve diabetes care in LMICs,” says Leif Fenger Jensen, Managing Director, World Diabetes Foundation.

The Diabetes Compass will leverage emerging digital solutions to find new ways of enhancing the ability of HCPs to prevent, diagnose and manage diabetes, ultimately allowing people with diabetes to live a full life, free of complications.

"Digital solutions can enable frontline healthcare professionals to connect to patients and resources in order to deliver the right care at the right time. Our support of the Diabetes Compass reflects Novo Nordisk’s commitment to defeat diabetes and improve access to care,” says Lars Fruegaard Jørgensen, chief executive officer, Novo Nordisk A/S.

“Three in four people with diabetes live in low- and middle-income countries, where healthcare workers often lack the resources to provide diabetes patients with proper care. With the Diabetes Compass and through local partnerships, we aim to provide practical and relevant digital resources and thereby strengthen their ability to deliver the right care at the right time,” says Mads Krosgaard Thomsen, chief executive officer, Novo Nordisk Foundation.

To start the work, the World Diabetes Foundation will initiate conversations with partners, frontline HCPs, and people with diabetes in LMICs. These discussions will help develop a holistic understanding of how the Diabetes Compass can target unmet needs and build local implementation partnerships.

The Diabetes Compass is fully aligned with the goals set out by the WHO Global Diabetes Compact by aiming to enhance access to quality care and striving to improve the lives of people living with diabetes.

The Diabetes Compass will be led and anchored at the World Diabetes Foundation.

Read more: www.worlddiabetesfoundation.org/what-we-do/digital-health/diabetes-compass

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**About the World Diabetes Foundation**
The World Diabetes Foundation is a leading global funder of diabetes prevention and care projects in low- and middle-income countries. Our
vision is to alleviate human suffering related to diabetes among those in greatest need. We pursue sustainable, scalable approaches, helping countries meet global goals for improved care of diabetes and other non-communicable diseases. Since 2002, the World Diabetes Foundation has provided EUR 168 million in funding to 572 partnership projects in 119 countries. For every euro of WDF funding provided, about 2 euros in cash or in-kind donations are contributed to the supported projects from other sources. To learn more, visit www.worlddiabetesfoundation.org

About Novo Nordisk
Novo Nordisk is a leading global healthcare company, founded in 1923 and headquartered in Denmark. Our purpose is to drive change to defeat diabetes and other serious chronic diseases such as obesity and rare blood and endocrine disorders. We do so by pioneering scientific breakthroughs, expanding access to our medicines, and working to prevent and ultimately cure diseases. Novo Nordisk employs about 45,000 people in 80 countries and markets its products in around 170 countries. Learn more at www.novonordisk.com

About the Novo Nordisk Foundation
The Novo Nordisk Foundation is an independent Danish foundation with corporate interests. It has two objectives: 1) To provide a stable basis for the commercial and research activities of the companies in the Novo Group; and 2) To support scientific, humanitarian and social causes. The vision of the Foundation is to contribute significantly to research and development that improves the lives of people and the sustainability of society. Since 2010, the Foundation has donated more than DKK 25 billion (€3.3 billion), primarily for research at public institutions and hospitals in Denmark and the other Nordic countries. Read more at www.novonordiskfonden.dk/en

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