



Support, Information and a Voice for the Type 1 Community

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Greetings!

Welcome to February's edition of *Yada Yada*.

This month we're really excited to tell you about the launch of a great new resource for trainee endocrinologists. T1DN provided feedback on the draft and a few of the T1DN committee were lucky enough to go along to the launch in Melbourne last weekend.

We also have more about the Melbourne World Diabetes Congress from December last year. Melinda Seed has written a summary of the highlights and a report on one of the sessions from the 'Living with diabetes' stream. We'll have another session report in March.

Finally, we look at an incredible data visualisation project by a grad student with type 1.

Remember to check out our [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter account](#). Like or follow us to keep up to date with all things T1DN and other happenings throughout the month.

Enjoy!



Launch of resource for trainee endocrinologists

Chatting to people with type 1 diabetes, we've heard plenty of complaints about endos who 'focus on the numbers' and forget we're people: zooming in on those two high sugars in a week of great results or declaring an HbA1c 'still not good enough' after a

dedicated effort to bring it down. There are some great endos who 'get it', but most of us have met some who don't appreciate how challenging life with type 1 can be. Given how difficult T1D is to manage, it's not surprising that some endos struggle to know how to best support, motivate and encourage people - not a trivial thing to do well.

We're therefore particularly excited about a new resource that aims to provide trainee endocrinologists with extra consultation skills to help them support people with type 1 diabetes. Back in 2011, Melbourne-based endocrinologists Jenny Conn and Alison Nankervis saw a need for a resource to upskill trainee endocrinologists in effective and empathetic ways to support and provide appropriate and vital resources for people with T1D. The initial idea of a small resource soon grew bigger and bigger, and received lots of input from other HPs, mostly notably Dr Carol Silberberg, a psychiatrist with an interest in type 1 diabetes, and Dr Christel Hendrieckx, a clinical psychologist with the Australian Centre for Behavioural Research in Diabetes. The end result is a comprehensive, evidence-based resource called 'Enhancing your consulting skills', which will be provided to trainee endocrinologists throughout Australia.



Colleen, Jen, Jenny Conn with the resource, Kerry and Vashti at the launch

T1DN gave rounds of feedback on the draft from a consumer perspective, and we were very pleased that four members of the T1DN committee were able to attend the launch in Melbourne last weekend. It was interesting to hear a doctor's perspective: one of the trainee endocrinologists who has trialled the resource spoke and said she had always hated diabetes clinic because she didn't understand how to effectively engage with patients. She blamed them at times and focused on the 'bad' numbers that needed improving. After being provided with advanced

consulting skills training, she now focuses on people's positive achievements, builds rapport and helps improve diabetes management. Even Jenny Conn tells us that she learned a lot through developing the resource. She feels that other qualified endocrinologists may also benefit from reading it!

This is a great project and we're thrilled to have been involved. We're looking forward to seeing lots more endos who 'get it'.

'Enhancing your consulting skills' is an Australian Diabetes Society (ADS) project and was funded by the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS).

*******Sponsored Announcement*******

 <p>Medtronic</p> <p>Would you like more freedom and flexibility? Be able to eat when you want and reduce injections to ONE every 3 days? Medtronic Diabetes are holding FREE information events during March and April in NSW, QLD, VIC, TAS and SA. The events will focus on managing hypos and exercise with T1D, featuring guest speakers at each event! CLICK HERE to register.</p>	
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For more information: contact 1800 337 136 or email austalia.diabetes@medtronic.com

World Diabetes Congress report

In December Yada we had a brief summary of the massive World Diabetes Congress in Melbourne. It was such an intense week that it's impossible to do it justice in a single Yada issue.

Luckily, Melinda Seed and Kate Gilbert from [Twice Diabetes](#) attended on media passes for T1DN, and Mel has written a trip report, which is up on [our website](#).

Mel talks about how incredible it was to see so many people with type 1 at the conference and how frustrating it was that a lot of health professionals still don't seem to understand what it's like to live with diabetes. There are bright lights though, with some HPs coining new terms to get to the heart of helping people live with type 1.

Mel also reports on what went on inside some of the scientific panels and discussions including the continuing stigma of type 1 diabetes, updates on the artificial pancreas project, and progress towards a cure. We heard heartbreaking stories from developing nations where insulin is difficult to access and the life expectancy of children with type 1 is just a few years.

We'll also feature two individual session reports from Mel: 'Living with diabetes: Building effective relationships with healthcare professionals', which you can read below and 'Living with diabetes: Type 1 diabetes and stigma', which will be in March Yada.

Overall though, it was great to have this international diabetes event in Australia. Bring on [Vancouver 2015!](#)

[Kris Freeman, cross-country skiing in Sochi](#)

We profiled cross-country skier Kris Freeman in last month's Yada, and he has since competed in the Sochi Winter Olympics. You can check out his results on the official [Sochi website](#) or get updates from his [TeamFreebirdXC](#) Twitter account.

He came 52nd of 92 in the 15-km classic, 54th of 68 in the 30-km skiathlon, and 57th of 64 in the 50-km free. Kris had hoped to place higher and so is a little disappointed with his results. However, we think his achievement of being world-class in such a gruelling endurance event is fantastic. Well done!

[WDC session report by Melinda Seed](#)

[Living with diabetes: Building effective relationships with healthcare practitioners](#)

healthcare practitioners

I was really looking forward to this session and hoped to be able to share some useful tips and strategies with you. Unfortunately, a room full of people with diabetes learnt that there are no magic bullets and there are good reasons, sadly, for all those rants that we've shared on the [Reality Check forum](#), [Facebook](#) and other social media about healthcare professionals. There were three presenters: the first was one of the young leaders with diabetes who presented an argument that people with diabetes should be formally included as part of the multidisciplinary care team of people with type 1. There wasn't time to elucidate on how this could be done, and when asked, nobody in the audience said they had seen this model in practice. It would be interesting to see this idea teased out more and particularly how social media could be used to help with this.

Next up was a Certified Diabetes Educator from the Shoalhaven on the NSW south coast who presented findings from a survey of GPs she had conducted. The upshot of GPs' thoughts on people with diabetes was that 'they had difficulty getting their patients to comply' and '90% of people with diabetes thought they knew more about diabetes than they really did'. I had difficulty determining what the point of the presentation was as it wasn't clearly stated, but I think it was that CDEs could help GPs with these problematic 'diabetics'. This survey drew some fired-up comments from the audience, including the assertion that '90% of type 1s believe GPs think they know more about type 1 diabetes than they really do'.

Fortunately the last presenter, a GP of Indian descent, stood up and said that GPs didn't know anything about type 1, and she didn't know anything about it until her son was diagnosed. She was fairly critical of the attitudes of doctors at her son's clinic, "They speak to me very slowly if I wear my Indian clothes". She was amusing and personable and 'got' diabetes.

My take-home message from this session was that you can't assume that GPs know very much about diabetes and neither can you expect them to take your views and knowledge seriously.

Fortunately in Australia we have choice about the health practitioners that we see, so I resolved from the session that that's the best we can hope for. Find health practitioners that are knowledgeable and/or willing to learn and that YOU can build an effective relationship with and then hang onto them because they're rare and precious!

Databetes

At times, T1D management can feel like it's all about numbers. What's my BGL? How much insulin do I need to give for this banana if I'm going to the gym in 2 hours? Most of us are familiar with being a bit overwhelmed by the numbers and having difficulty keeping track well enough to figure out what works and what doesn't. After more than 25 years with type 1 diabetes, NYU graduate student Doug Kanter decided to see if he could take a more systematic approach.

In 2012, Doug tracked over 91,000 BGL measurements from his CGM, and combined it with his exercise and food data. The incredible thing is what he then did with the data. As part of his graduate thesis in data visualisation, Doug created a single image that contained his BGL level at all times during the day for the entire year, as well as how far he ran as he trained for a marathon. You can check out the poster that resulted on his blog [Databetic](#). As a result, his HbA1c dropped by almost a full point to close to 6%, which he put down to simply having better data about how his body works.

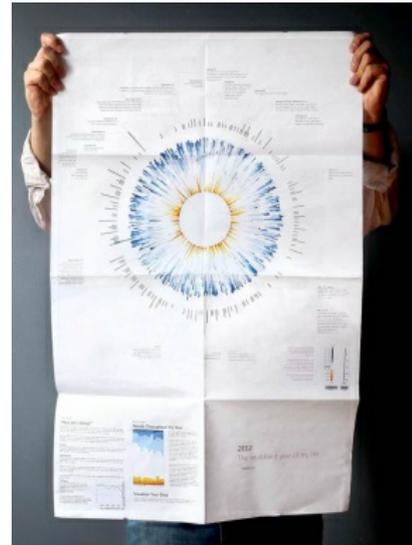


Image from databetic.com

It's really interesting stuff, but we're not sure any 'normal' person could replicate his data-collection efforts - one for the data nerds only, perhaps! Doug has started a company called [Databetes](#) that hopes to make this data-crunching power available to everyone. Databetes is also developing an app for photographing meals and adding data about carb count, insulin given, BGL etc. Two hours after the meal, the app reminds you to check your BGL again to give you data on how different meals affect you.

Doug hopes to eventually have a product that can sync to meters, CGMs and pumps to make the data collection less onerous.

[A Sweet Life](#) had a really good article covering Doug and Databetes.

Interesting links

- [Stem cells from skin produce beta cells in mice](#)
- [Glucose control after breakfast is a major factor affecting HbA1c](#)
- [Diabetes Art Day galleries](#)

Meet-ups and events

There are a couple of meet-ups being organised for Queensland readers on our Reality Check forum:

- [Brisbane: Monday, March 3](#)
- [Townsville: Sunday, March 2](#)

Quick shots

Hot topics on the Reality Check online forum include:

- [Abnormally low HbA1c](#)
- [Wearing a pump with attitude](#)
- [Faulty strips: no-one wants responsibility](#)
- [Seeing a kidney specialist: what to expect?](#)
- [Swimming, BGL levels and insulin](#)

You can keep up to date with what's going on in the diabetes world by following us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

Thanks for reading, and don't forget you can always send us your feedback and comments by replying to this email. We'll see you next time!

***From everyone at
The Type 1 Diabetes Network***

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