

**UNDERRATED KEY TO SUCCESSFUL THERAPY
BAYER HEALTHCARE DIABETES CARE HELPS SIMPLIFY LIFE FOR PATIENTS WITH
DIABETES AND THEIR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS**

Basel/Switzerland, April 22, 2009 – Self-monitoring of blood glucose levels (SMBG) is an essential, but often underappreciated, part of a successful diabetes management program. By helping patients maintain blood glucose levels within acceptable ranges, effective SMBG helps minimize the risk of long-term diabetes-related complications and allows patients and health care providers (HCPs) to tailor therapy, diet and exercise regimens to improve patients' health.

Despite the efforts of the diabetes care community, many patients with diabetes (PWDs) are either unaware of SMBG's benefits or find testing multiple times a day to be challenging. Getting patients to test regularly is therefore a major opportunity to improve health outcomes and reduce diabetes-related health care expenditures. And given that the United Nations has called diabetes a global epidemic, this goal is now more critical than ever.

To share insights and ideas on how best to manage diabetes and support PWDs, scientists, physicians, nurses, diabetes organization heads, patients and representatives from Bayer HealthCare Diabetes Care gathered in Basel on April 22, 2009, for the third European Media Workshop on Diabetes. Hosted by Bayer, the event provided background information, clinical insights and expert opinions, and sharing of best practices and recommendations for optimizing diabetes treatment.

Diabetes management has come a long way over the past 40 years: The introduction of portable blood glucose monitoring systems by Bayer's Former division Ames and the development of different kinds of insulin by other health care pioneers has helped people with diabetes lead less restrictive and healthier lives. However, while there are numerous innovative diabetes-related products and services on the market, many patients, their families and HCPs are still overwhelmed by the complexities and demands of managing diabetes on a daily basis. In his honorary speech at the Media Workshop, Sir Michael Hirst, Vice President of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), United Kingdom, stated that a diagnosis of diabetes and its consequences is not only a challenge for individuals and their families, but also for politics and society. "Due to the natural progression of Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, primary prevention of the metabolic disorder is a cross-cutting issue, which has to be tackled by governments, industry, healthcare professionals as well as diabetes organizations alike." Sir Michael stressed that raising awareness of diabetes and its complications must take place in fields like health, education, sports and exercise, town planning, and public campaigns and that cross-functional action is needed to stem the epidemic. For example, the public and private sectors should work together to address increasing rates of obesity by identifying "at risk" groups and creating a culture of exercise in schools and urban areas by making better use of community facilities.

With regard to raising awareness of the importance of SMBG for successful therapy, Professor Bruno L. Vergès, Centre Hospitalier Universitaire du Bocage, Dijon, France, added that PWDs and HCPs should be continuously educated on the potential of regular measurements to enhance clinical outcome and quality of life. "SMBG improves levels of HbA1c (glycated haemoglobin, an important indicator of long-term blood sugar control), reduces the risk of diabetes complications

and mortality, allows early identification of hypoglycaemia, improves patient well-being and the awareness of the disease”, said Professor Vergès. He recommended that patients report their test results to HCPs who can work with them on individualized diabetes management plans.

Professor Vergès recommendation is crucial because numerous studies have found that most patients do not check their blood glucose values regularly – if at all. The Fremantle study (Davis et al., 2006) confirmed that only 70 percent of respondents with Type 2 diabetes had tested their blood glucose levels over the past seven days (an average of 4 times per week) while nearly one-third never tested at all. The Karter Permanente study (Karter et al., 2001) reported similar findings: 25 percent of patients had not purchased testing strips for an entire year.

What deters PWDs from testing their blood glucose levels, even when they know that stable values help minimize the risk of debilitating and life-threatening complications? Dr. Koula Asimakopoulou, King’s College London, United Kingdom, offered the audience intriguing answers: About 45 percent of Type 2 patients in the Fremantle study reported never having had any instruction on using a meter, 31 percent were unmotivated to start testing and nine percent said they feared pricking their finger for a blood sample (Davis et al., 2006). “These results underline that supporting patients in SMBG is always a two step process”, explained Dr. Asimakopoulou. “It comprises ensuring a sound knowledge basis as well as turning SMBG into a habitual behaviour.”

How this can be achieved? How important are HCPs in helping patients optimize their treatment? These questions were answered by Anne-Marie Felton, President of FEND (Federation of European Nurses in Diabetes) and Vice President of the IDF, United Kingdom. Felton reported that factors like diabetes knowledge, and perceived benefits or relationships with HCPs especially influence the patients’ behaviour. “Diabetes nurses play a key role in motivating patients to succeed in self-managing their condition”, she said. “Nevertheless, motivation is not a constant and changes over a person’s lifetime, which is why continuous mentoring by qualified personnel is an integral part of treating diabetes successfully.” In future, a new patient assessment tool initiated by Bayer HealthCare will enhance patient self-management even more, as Anne-Marie Felton is convinced. The questionnaire, which was developed with the help of leading experts in this field, evaluates all aspects of diabetes management and helps nurses to structure time with patients and to recognize individual barriers to effective treatment, and allows them to better act as positive influences and motivators.

Jessica, a 24 year old student from Switzerland, provided the perspective of patient diagnosed with diabetes in adolescence. Jessica, who was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at age 11, related how important education on self-management was in helping her succeed in managing her condition. She also explained that the personal, trusting relationship with her diabetes nurse was a vitally important and life-saving factor especially following a dangerous hypoglycaemic episode. “Nurses have a major advantage over other HCPs – they have the human touch”, Jessica told the audience in Basel. “They aren’t only concerned with calculating numbers and are less likely to judge patients.” She hopes that all PWDs find an advocate like her diabetes nurse who helped her to build greater self-confidence in managing diabetes as a daily routine and not punish herself if she makes mistakes.

Geri Winkler provided another example of a life unencumbered by diabetes. Winkler, 53, is a mountaineer and adventurer from Austria who has Type 1 diabetes. Instead of feeling defeated by his diagnosis, Geri is living his life’s dream to the fullest by travelling the world and climbing the highest mountain summits on each continent. When he was diagnosed in 1984, however, patients with diabetes still faced many limitations. But Geri soon benefited from more innovative blood glucose monitors and new, quicker-acting insulins that allow more individualized therapy. “I gradually realized that you can incorporate diabetes into your life and that with the right treatment everything is possible”, said Geri Winkler. Today, he measures his blood sugar with the help of a multi-test monitor from Bayer.

Geri Winkler's story shows how Bayer has helped people with diabetes lead more independent, self-determined, and active lives. "Our goal is to simplify life with diabetes – for patients as well as healthcare professionals", stated Sandra E. Peterson, Executive Vice President, Bayer HealthCare LLC and President Bayer HealthCare, Medical Care, Tarrytown, USA. For the past three years, Bayer has been the fastest growing provider of blood glucose monitoring systems worldwide and has a proud history of technological firsts in diabetes management including the first blood glucose testing strips and the first portable blood glucose meter. Bayer's commitment to diabetes management is also evidenced in its numerous partnerships with patients, healthcare organizations and medical providers to expand the knowledge on effective diabetes care and the importance of SMBG. "We see our mission as improving public awareness and patient empowerment", Peterson said. "While Bayer cannot cure diabetes, our products and services can help people with diabetes achieve small wins every day, which add up to larger victories over time!"

About Bayer HealthCare Diabetes Care Bayer HealthCare, Diabetes Care supports customers in 100 countries and stands in a long tradition of leading the way in diabetes care product innovation since the introduction of CLINITEST reagent tablets in 1941. The face of diabetes care was changed in 1969 when the first portable blood glucose meter and test strips were introduced. Bayer HealthCare further innovated diabetes management by being the first company to introduce a suite of blood glucose monitors with No Coding™ technology. The BREEZE® 2 and CONTOUR® blood glucose monitoring systems offer people with diabetes an excellent choice in diabetes management systems. Bayer HealthCare Diabetes Care global headquarters is located in Tarrytown, New York, in the United States and operates as part of Bayer HealthCare LLC, a member of the worldwide Bayer HealthCare group. The Headquarters for the region Europe-MERA is located in Basel as part of Bayer Consumer Care AG, in Basel. For more information, visit www.bayerdiabetes.com.

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Contact

Dr. Gisela Lenz

Phone: +49 214 30-58030

Fax: +49 214 30-9658030