

Diabetes tops political health agenda

At a recent London event to mark World Diabetes Day (14 November) Andrew Lansley, Secretary of State for Health and principal guest speaker, was clearly up to speed with the importance of diabetes as a global pandemic and was evidently very much aware of the serious implications for the lives of people with diabetes and its considerable consequences to the NHS. In a very positive, unscripted speech, Andrew Lansley outlined his commitment to the national diabetes agenda, setting priorities for research, prevention and clinical service. Referring to the current government White Paper for Health, he underlined his determination to ensure that benefits are delivered in terms of real clinical outcomes, that people with diabetes should become their own experts as much as possible and that health care professionals have greater opportunity to develop local integrated clinical services. The Secretary of State's focus on improving clinical outcomes in diabetes and patient experience of living with diabetes is encouraging. The political momentum has been established, opportunities will need to be taken, but such recognition of diabetes is well received.

World Diabetes Day was launched in 1991 under the auspices of the International Diabetes Federation and the World Health Organization, with 14 November chosen as it marks the birthday of Frederick Banting. World Diabetes Day is a worldwide initiative to raise global awareness and understanding of diabetes. Following the successful United Nations resolution three years ago, the campaign



(L–R): Andrew Lansley, Secretary of State for Health, and Viggo Birch, Managing Director of Novo Nordisk UK and Ireland, at the recent World Diabetes Day event in London

continues with this year's slogan 'Let's Take Control'. This concordance of World Diabetes Day objectives with the Secretary of State's political endorsement provides a most welcome platform to take the campaign forwards.

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