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Dear NN,

Subject: Special issue on the prevention of diabetes in Primary Care Diabetes in 2021

The year 2021 will mark the 20th anniversary of the landmark publication of the Finnish Diabetes Prevention Study (DPS), the first proper randomized controlled trial in the prevention of type 2 diabetes (T2D) in May 2001 (NEJM 2001; 344: 1343-50). The DPS demonstrated a 58% reduction in the incidence of T2D in people with impaired glucose tolerance (IGT). As a consequence of the DPS publication, the ongoing US Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) had to carry out a premature interim analysis; the results were strikingly identical with the DPS: a 58% risk reduction in incidence of T2D (NEJM 2002: 346:393–403).It will also mark the 100-year anniversary of the first international publication on the prevention of diabetes entitled “The Prevention of Diabetes Mellitus” by Elliot Joslin in JAMA (1921;76 (2): Jan 8).

According to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) 2019 Diabetes Atlas, the global estimate of adults living with diabetes was 151 million in 2000. By 2009 it had grown by 88% to 285 million. Today, IDF has estimated that 9.3% of adults aged 20–79 years – a staggering 463 million people – are living with diabetes. A further 1.1 million children and adolescents under the age of 20, live with type 1 diabetes. A decade ago, in 2010, the global projection for diabetes in 2025 was 438 million. IDF now estimates that there will be 578 million adults with diabetes by 2030, and 700 million by 2045. In addition, a similar number of adults have prediabetes, of whom more than half will progress to diabetes within 10 years. IDF estimates the annual global health expenditure on diabetes at USD 760 billion. It is projected that these direct costs will reach USD 825 billion by 2030 and USD 845 billion by 2045. More than 50% of these costs are related to the treatment of complications. More than 4 million people with diabetes die annually, one person every 7 seconds, and of them more than are aged 60 years or younger.

It is obvious that more efforts are needed for primary prevention of diabetes, in addition to efficient diabetes care, to reduce this huge burden of diabetes. This requires multidisciplinary efforts and co-operation among many stakeholders. Scientific research related to the prevention of diabetes and its complications is very important, since through research the necessary facts and data will be obtained. The lack of such solid data proving that prevention of T2D is possible has been one reason why there was a long delay in the serious efforts for T2D prevention that was already suggested in 1921 by Dr. Joslin.

During the past 20 years the prevention of T2D has become an important topic in the public health agenda. Throughout the world many studies on the prevention of T2D have been established with various designs. Results from these studies have increasingly accumulated new data on the potential for prevention using both non-pharmacologic and pharmacologic approaches. Also public health projects to prevent T2D at the population level have been set up in several countries and communities. Such translational research is the necessary step in implementing the results from research to clinical practice. Such implementation will be best carried out through primary care. One of the most important aspects of the work in the modern primary care is the prevention of chronic diseases including diabetes, T2D and gestational diabetes (GDM).

The Foundation for the World Community for Prevention of Diabetes (WCPD) with its headquarters in Madrid Spain is a global organisation aiming at promoting action on the prevention of diabetes and its complications. WCPD Foundation is organizing the World Congress on the Prevention of Diabetes and Its Complications every second year, organized 10 times by now. In addition, the WCPD Foundation is promoting many other activities related to diabetes prevention, such as disseminating information about diabetes prevention through publications. The present plan of having a Special Issue in the journal Primary Care Diabetes (Elsevier) is part of the activities planned by the WCPD Foundation.

In order to prepare such a Special Issue there will be expenses. To cover these, the WPCD Foundation is seeking unrestricted educational grants from various potential sponsoring institutions and industry. Enclosed you’ll find the publication plan for the Special Issue. The donors will be ranked into 3 categories: Platinum (15,000 € grant), Gold (10,000 € grant) and Silver (5000 € grant).

We hope that you are willing to support this important activity and assist in attempts to improve the prevention of diabetes globally. Please send your reply at your earliest convenience to me: tuomilehto@hotmail.com. We can then discuss the details of the grant contract between your organization and the WCPD Foundation.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the WCPD Foundation

Jaakko Tuomilehto

MD, MA, PhD, FRCP (Edin), FESC

Professor

President, WCPD Foundation