

Between March 2016 to October 2018, MP Sidhu has:

- Attended over **70** meetings, events, and announcements
- Spoken **40** times in the Health Committee about Diabetes
- Spoken **11** times in the House of Commons about Diabetes
- Organized **40** MPs to post healthy new year's resolutions and to raise awareness about the importance of healthy lifestyles
- Got nearly **60** MPs to participate in the Diabetes Step Challenge to raise awareness and show leadership on physical activity and maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- Met with **dozens** of researchers, scientists, experts, community leaders, doctors, non-profits, and stakeholders regarding diabetes
- Held **16** consultations across Canada to develop a report on the need for an updated National Diabetes Strategy
- Made **6** visits to organizations and institutions that are innovating in developing Canadian solutions, research, and technologies in the fight against diabetes
 - Banting House, E-Health, Medtronic, Cannon, St. Michaels, William Osler Health Services
- Participated in **4** Walks/Runs to raise awareness and funds in the fight against diabetes
- Chaired or co-chaired **4** meetings of the All-Party Diabetes Caucus
- Participated in **3** meetings of the Health Committee dedicated to a study on diabetes strategies in Canada, a study MP Sidhu pushed for
- Spoke at **3** major diabetes conferences in her role as Chair of the All-Party Diabetes Caucus or on behalf of the Minister of Health
- Made **2** major diabetes research funding announcements on behalf of the Health Minister equaling a federal commitment of **\$17 Million** dollars for diabetes research
- Published **2** articles in the Hill Times highlighting the importance of combatting diabetes
- Introduced **2** motions to the House of Commons regarding diabetes
 - M-118 [Diabetes Study – February 2017]
 - M-173 [Diabetes Awareness Month – March 2018]
- Introduced **1** Bill to the House of Commons regarding Diabetes Awareness Month
 - Bill C-403 [Diabetes Awareness Month Act – May 2018]
- Established **1** proclamation within the City of Brampton declaring November 14 as World Diabetes Day in Brampton.

Research Funding Announcements

- May 2018 - \$7.7 million investment into diabetes research that would support the clinical trials of ground-breaking therapies in order to accelerate the development of new treatments for people living with type 1 diabetes
- July 2018 - \$9.3 Million investment into the Clinical Trials Initiative, providing support for seven research projects tackling diabetes, obesity, and more, with three of the projects to be based out of St. Michael's Hospital

Hill Time Articles

Article: Time to slow Canada's tsunami of diabetes

Date: November 30 2016

Link: <https://www.hilltimes.com/2016/11/30/time-slow-canadas-tsunami-diabetes/>

Article: Staying Health on the Hill

Date: November 15 2016

Link: <https://www.hilltimes.com/2016/11/15/staying-healthy-hill/>

Motions and Bill Text

Bill C-403 [Diabetes Awareness Month Act – May 2018]

Whereas one in four Canadians lives with prediabetes or diabetes, a chronic disease that can result in life-threatening complications if not treated;

Whereas diabetes awareness and education can help people identify early signs of diabetes and thus prevent or delay its onset;

And whereas Canada, the birthplace of insulin — a hormone that plays a key role in the control of diabetes —, seeks to be a leader in promoting diabetes awareness by designating the month of November as Diabetes Awareness Month;

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada enacts as follows:

Throughout Canada, in each and every year, the month of November is to be known as “Diabetes Awareness Month”.

M-173 [Diabetes Awareness Month – March 2018]

That, in the opinion of the House, the government should recognize that one in four Canadians is living with diabetes or pre-diabetes, and, without treatment, diabetes can result in life-threatening complications, and that diabetes awareness and education can help identify early signs of diabetes and prevent onset for millions of Canadians, and that as the birthplace of insulin, Canada should be a leader in diabetes awareness by declaring November of every year as Diabetes Awareness Month.

M-118 [Diabetes Study – February 2017]

That, in the opinion of the House:

(a) the government should recognize that diabetes and prediabetes affect over 11 million Canadians as of 2017 and that if nothing is done to address this mounting public health crisis, which disproportionately affects certain communities, Canadians will bear increasingly higher costs, both personal and financial;

(b) the government should recognize the serious impacts that diabetes and prediabetes have on millions upon millions of Canadians by marking the month of November, every year, as Diabetes Awareness Month;

(c) the Standing Committee on Health should study the important issue of diabetes and prediabetes, focusing on prevention and control, and develop a plan for a National Diabetes Strategy; and

(d) the Committee should report back to the House within 90 days of the adoption of this motion.

OTTAWA HOSPITAL AND DIABETES CANADA - July 25, 2017

A small meeting was held by MP Sidhu in Ottawa with healthcare professionals from The Ottawa Hospital, and representatives of Diabetes Canada. This meeting provided important insight into the role and struggles of dieticians and endocrinologists as they work to defeat diabetes.

While Ottawa has a highly educated population and good access to health care, the participants noted that many aren't being screened for diabetes. When patients are admitted into the hospital, more than 30% of those admitted already have diabetes, but may not know about it. Early diagnosis could lead to fewer complications and fewer people requiring hospital admittance. It was agreed upon that patients tend to discover diabetes through complications that present themselves in their health.

There was a significant emphasis in this meeting on the note that information will not create behavioural change, and that the environment in which we purchase food, cook and consume food must change. One participant noted that many patients with diabetes will claim they are 'taking a break' from eating well to manage their diabetes, despite knowing the complications and risks.

Some of the conversation pointed to a shift away from language that determines healthy or unhealthy choices, but looks rather to wholesome foods. Labeling foods as good and bad can translate these qualities to the individual, and has been seen to be detrimental to changing behaviours.

MONTREAL CONSULTATIONS - July 26, 2017

MP Sidhu also met with industry professionals in Quebec, the province that presents the second lowest rate of obesity in Canada. When asked about this, participants suggest that a unique Quebec lifestyle could be a significant factor, emphasizing cycling as a primary means of transportation, and a diet that contains fewer carbohydrates. However, problems still remain. Cooking is still prohibitively expensive due to high ingredient and food costs; moreover, Quebecers spend a large amount of time at work and don't find the time to cook either. Many suggestions were made for financial incentives to healthy eating, which would lower the impact on the healthcare system through preventative health. Additionally, participants noted that the removal of the children's activity tax credit reduces accessibility to physical activity for Canadians, especially those in lower income families.

Regarding the Food Guide, participants said it is not effective, especially for immigrant populations. Many suggested community-based learning should be encouraged, with community and faith leaders setting examples of health eating and healthy living. An example of community programming is school gardening led by Québec en forme. However, without core funding (currently funded by the province), this program will soon end.

WINNIPEG CONSULTATIONS - July 27, 2017

At MP Sidhu's consultation in Winnipeg, the message was similar to what was heard in previous meetings. Participants said clearly that food insecurity is a major barrier to healthy eating. While people know what food they should be consuming, many cannot access it due to high costs, especially in northern regions of the province. Again, participants said that knowledge does not translate into change. Even with sufficient information on healthy eating and healthy living, many people do not have time to cook at home, or the knowledge of what to cook. What is missing is guidance and access to guidance – especially for vulnerable population groups. For example, education and documentation material aren't readily available to marginalized communities.

A significant focus of the Winnipeg meeting was on Indigenous People, as they are one of the highest risk populations for development of diabetes. While food insecurity is a known problem here, there are also factors that encourage consumption of unhealthy food items. One participant gave an example of significant costs for produce, whereas junk food and alcohol are inexpensive in isolated communities.

VANCOUVER CONSULTATIONS - July 28, 2017

MP Sidhu met with industry experts in Vancouver, who spoke about guidance and misinformation. While Canadians have sufficient information about healthy eating, there is not enough guidance. This is especially true with regard to unhealthy food advertising. There needs to be a shift from a focus on weight to healthy eating. However, information by itself is not enough. Most people can tell you what is healthy, but a gap exists in what people know and what they do. This is largely due to the influence of environment and socioeconomic status.

At risk populations especially are not receiving enough guidance. South Asian populations, for example, need to be targeted at their own level. When immigrants transition from their original countries to Canada they are likely to pick up unhealthy lifestyle habits.

Moreover, there is a problem with misinformation and information contradictory to leading a healthy lifestyle. There are many initiatives that are already struggling against misinformation that is leading to slow uptake with their programs or from being effective as they can be.

Overall, participants suggested that Canadians need to be reached with fact based information and they need a central place to get this information – Health Canada must be made the go-to place for accurate information Canadians can trust for meaningful change to take place.