



## Politicians unite in the fight against diabetes



'Diabetes Awareness' in Parliament attended by leading MPs from the National Party, Labour Party, Green Party, Liberal Party and Maori Party including Pita Sharples and Tony Ryall

Diabetes is one of the National Government's top six health targets as it affects more than 210,000 people nationwide. Last November 16, opposing political forces united for a day in the fight against the disease.

Ministers, as well as MPs from all sides of the House, attended a Diabetes Awareness Event in Parliament. The event sent a positive message to the wider general public about the importance of diabetes awareness and marked the start of Diabetes Awareness Week 2010.

It was considered by medical professionals who attended to be the most successful awareness event in Parliament to date, with more than 150 parliamentary staff and 40-45 MPs tested for diabetes. It was covered by the Dominion Post, Te Karere and local newspapers, as well as on Ministers' websites and social networks. Maori Party co-leader Turiana Turia also put a statement on her party's website, the Beehive website and her own personal website, advocating support and awareness of Diabetes Awareness Week.

The event was useful in making many of the ministers realise they needed to be more aware of their lifestyle choices. It gave simple messages: Be aware of what you eat, and exercise for 30 minutes a day. There was a strong representation from Indian, Chinese, Samoan, Maori, Pacifica and Asian ethnicities, and the nurses on site felt this was a positive sign as these communities were most at risk.

New Zealand is second in the world, behind the United States, for Type 2 diabetes deaths, and it is estimated one in 10 adults will suffer from Type 2 within the next 20 years. Ninety percent of those diagnosed with diabetes are Type 2 – the kind which can be prevented or controlled through healthy eating and exercise.

Health Minister Tony Ryall said: "Diabetes is a growing concern in modern society. The symptoms are not always obvious and it is widely undiagnosed. Diabetes Awareness Week is a valuable opportunity for the wider community to learn more about simple lifestyle choices that can be made to reduce the risk of developing diabetes."

Mr Ryall recommended anyone concerned about their health seek professional advice.

Diabetes New Zealand President, Chris Baty said: "The impact of diabetes is not just on our health and wellbeing. It threatens to affect our economy and workforce due to the long-term effects in some people, which can include amputation, blindness, heart attacks, stroke, kidney disease and death, not to mention how much it is costing taxpayers in healthcare costs."



“It is not sustainable and we are eating ourselves into an early grave. Rather than relying on the health system to fix the problem, we need to collectively work together to prevent it. That’s what this year’s Diabetes Awareness Week was about, encouraging people to make small, progressive steps in the fight against diabetes.”

Diabetes Awareness Week was supported in New Zealand by the Silver Ferns, Kiel McNaughton and Ben Mitchell (*Shortland Street*), Ron Crib (former All Black), Sir Peter Leitch (AKA The Mad Butcher), Kingi Biddle, Buck Shelford and politicians Turiana Turia (Maori Party), Tony Ryall, Chris Tremain and Tau Henare (National). Internationally, diabetes is supported by A-listers such as Halle Berry, Gordon Ramsay and the Jonas Brothers. ●

## Simple and Stylish.

## The HumaPen® Range of Insulin Pens.



HumaPen®  
LUXURA



HumaPen®  
LUXURA HD™



HumaPen®  
MEMOIR™

HumaPens can only be used with the Lilly range of insulins. For more information talk to your diabetes healthcare professional and follow the instructions that you are given.

Eli Lilly and Company (NZ) Ltd, PO Box 109197, Newmarket, Auckland 1149. TAPS CH2542. NZDVC00006. H&T ELI1272.

