



## The Lebanese Society of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Lipids, in collaboration with Sanofi, launches the first Diabetes Management Forum

*“Diabetes in Lebanon, where are we standing?”*

**Beirut, Lebanon - 5 May 2017** – Under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Health, the Lebanese Society for Endocrinology, Diabetes and Lipids (LSEDL) in collaboration with Sanofi organized the first Diabetes Management Forum in Lebanon. Entitled “Diabetes in Lebanon, where are we standing?”, the forum was designed to underline the acute ordeal faced by healthcare providers, patients and their caregivers and highlighted the current situation from detection, treatment, management and costs.

Held at Hilton Metropolitan Hotel, the event was attended by representatives from: Ministry of Public Health, LSEDL, National Social Security Fund (NSSF), Lebanese Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics, Lebanese Order of Nurses, Sanofi, and members of the press. This forum aims at sharing updates and latest developments by providing recent data and practices to manage diabetes.

Glycemic management of type 2 diabetes (T2DM) has changed considerably over the past decade. Clinicians and patients can now choose from 12 different classes of glucose-lowering medications to manage hyperglycemia.

Showcasing in its first session an overview utilizing the results of data gathered in 2016 related to the management of diabetes in Lebanon, the forum highlighted the heavy cost burden borne by National payers and patients. The second session hosted a panel discussion headed by Dr. Mahmoud Choucair, Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine-Endocrinologist and featured keynote speakers representing the healthcare system. The discussions emphasized the importance of adopting a cost effective management approach for Diabetes in Lebanon.

The international Diabetes Management survey has demonstrated an overall stagnant situation in terms of patient control since only 31.4% of Diabetic patients across therapeutic classes have an HbA1c below the target value of 7%. Thus, the remaining 68.6% will still have an additional cost burden on society and authorities as an uncontrolled Diabetic is more prone to increased risk for complications, including eye and kidney diseases as well as cardiovascular issues<sup>[1]</sup>.

Speaking on behalf of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health, Mr. Ghassan Hasbani, Dr. Akram Ehtay, Director of the National Diabetes Program highlighted the efforts deployed by the ministry to manage diabetes: *“The well-being of the Lebanese society is our main concern. As diabetes remains a major healthcare challenge for all concerned parties, we are in the process of launching a national awareness campaign and a comprehensive program engaging the healthcare system.”* He concluded: *“By consolidating all efforts we can create a supportive and well equipped community for individuals to lead lives free from diabetes, and for those suffering from the condition to better manage it so that they can enjoy a good quality of life.”*

Unveiling the findings of a National Survey on Diabetes prevalence in Lebanon, Dr. Salim Adib, Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health at AUB stated: *“The prevalence of Diabetes Mellitus in Lebanon has been slightly increasing compared to Gulf region since 1960. Out of 4500 households,*



*almost one third of them reported having at least one diabetic patient. Of the total sample of 17,832 Lebanese people, about 8% were previously diagnosed with diabetes. Management of diabetes appears to be deficient based on delays in standard control testing (25% of patients) and diabetes-related complications (22%), especially retinopathy.” He concluded: “We highly recommend assigning the coordination of diabetic patients care management to Primary Health Care physicians, to keep track of regular referrals and various aspects of diabetes care. National screening activities are needed to uncover the proportion of diabetic patients who are not yet aware of their condition (as much as 50% in previous studies).”*

*“Diabetes is growing worldwide and the management of this condition includes oral classes of medications and injectable treatments insulins & others. The goal is to prevent complications and enhance the patient’s quality of life in line with global therapeutic guidelines,” said Dr. Emile Andari, President of LSEDL.*

*“In many countries the cost of diabetes reaches 20% of healthcare costs,” stated Dr. Mahmoud Choucair. “Managing the progress of the disease properly remains minimal as recommended tests and checkups are not followed properly by patients. Thus, the need for constant education and awareness,” he concluded.*

*Dr. Mirna Metni, Responsible pharmacist of drug registration and reimbursement at NSSF, said: “Variations in health care services have been well documented worldwide. The result is that increased health care spending is not uniformly associated with improved health. Total NSSF diabetes medication expenditure increased by 34% from 2013 to 2016. Coordinating between health care spending and improvements in patients’ health status needs collaboration between different stakeholders at a national level.”*

*Commenting on the results of the forum and the significant role of education and awareness for better disease management, Ghassan Beydoun, Country Chair of Sanofi Levant said: “As a global healthcare leader, we are keen on putting patients at the center of our interest particularly in diabetes field. This is why we are proud of the results achieved by this forum. With the efforts deployed by our partners we can now say that we have a complete picture of the gaps in diabetes managements in Lebanon and together we can try to interrupt that development through a proactive and preventive approach.”*

Patients’ well-being and quality of life is heavily impacted by Diabetes management as well as the complications deriving from a poor control such as depression which leads to loss in individual productivity.

## **About Sanofi**

Sanofi, a global healthcare leader, discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi is organized into five global business units: Diabetes and Cardiovascular, General Medicines and Emerging Markets, Sanofi Genzyme, Sanofi Pasteur and Consumer Healthcare. Sanofi is listed in Paris (EURONEXT: SAN) and in New York (NYSE: SNY).

## **Contacts:**

### **Sanofi in Lebanon**

**Hanane Katerji**

Phone +961 1 440 220 ext. 371

[hanane.katerji@sanofi.com](mailto:hanane.katerji@sanofi.com)

### References:

[1] International Diabetes Management Practices Study, Wave 6 (2013-2014),STUDY NUMBER: OBS13847