



The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care

Ref No: MC21-027947

03 SEP 2021

Mr Ken O'Dowd MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
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Dear Chair

I refer to your correspondence of 23 August 2021 concerning petition EN2914 – request to extend access to subsidised FreeStyle Libre to all Australians living with diabetes using insulin through the Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) Initiative.

The Australian Government is aware of the significant impact diabetes has on people with diabetes and their families, and is committed to working towards the broad prevention of the disease in the Australian community.

The Government provides considerable financial support to people with diabetes through the subsidy of essential medicines, like insulin, under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and diabetes-related products, like blood glucose test strips, through the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS).

The NDSS provides subsidised syringes and needles, blood glucose test strips, urine ketone test strips and insulin pump consumables to people with diabetes. It also provides educational and information services to assist in the best use of products and self-management of diabetes.

The CGM Initiative began in 2017, and provides fully subsidised CGM products to eligible people. Since that time, the eligibility criteria have been expanded to allow more people to benefit.

On 2 February 2020, I announced changes to the eligibility criteria that will result in more than 20,000 additional people having free access to CGM products.

The changes allow all people with type 1 diabetes aged 21 years or older who have concessional status to access CGM products, removing the requirement for these people to be assessed as having 'high clinical need'. This change will increase the total number of people eligible for CGM products to over 58,000.

The Government now provides fully subsidised CGM products to:

- children and young people, under 21 years of age, with type 1 diabetes
- children and young people with conditions very similar to type 1 diabetes, such as cystic fibrosis related diabetes and neonatal diabetes, who require insulin
- women with type 1 diabetes who are planning for pregnancy, pregnant or immediately post-pregnancy
- people with type 1 diabetes aged 21 years or older who have concessional status.

On 1 March 2020, the FreeStyle Libre Flash Glucose Monitoring system was added to the range of products subsidised under the CGM Initiative. This increases options for eligible people with diabetes in managing their condition.

Any decision to further expand the CGM Initiative would need to be considered against competing priorities in the Health Budget.

More information about the CGM Initiative is available on the NDSS website at: www.ndss.com.au/cgm.

Thank you for writing on this matter.

Yours sincerely 

Greg Hunt 