

## **Admin, LACO**

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**Subject:** FW: Inquiry into the role of diet in type 2 diabetes prevention and management

**From:**

**Sent:** Thursday, 11 October 2018 4:45 PM

**To:** Committee, Education & Health Standing <[laehsc@parliament.wa.gov.au](mailto:laehsc@parliament.wa.gov.au)>

**Subject:** Inquiry into the role of diet in type 2 diabetes prevention and management

**Attention: Education and Health Standing Committee**

**Re: Inquiry into the role of diet in type 2 diabetes prevention and management – my submission is as follows**

### **My Diabetes Type 2 Experience**

- My contact and personal details appear below – I am a 78 years-old private individual who was recently diagnosed (3<sup>rd</sup> August 2018) as a Type 2 Diabetic, and accordingly I have since modified my diet in preference to being administered medication for the condition.
- Medically, I have long been susceptible to the onset of diabetes 2, having registered blood sugar levels close to the diagnosis point over a number of years, and the fact that antecedent paternal family history of the complaint is also a probable factor. My slim physique and a non-smoker's healthy record over 70 years would not suggest that to be a major issue relating to diabetes type 2.
- For many years, my being conscious of my susceptibility, and the inherent dangers of a high sugar and carbohydrate food intake, I have long considered that my diet prior to diabetes diagnosis was basically a healthy diet. Little or no added sugars for approximately 20 years, and meal portions conservative, but confectionery has always been a weakness. The changes I have made to my diet since have proved previous thoughts to be wrong, and confirmed that it is better for me to focus on only consuming foods low in sugar and carbohydrate content and a low GI rating. Also to abstain from consuming sugar-loaded confectionery including shop-purchase cakes and sweet biscuits, fruit juices and soft drinks.
- Since the diagnosis I have recorded daily blood glucose levels, and tested myself with different foods and quantity etc. to ascertain and determine those that are or are not suitable to me. The results have proved encouraging in that they are mostly within the target of 5 to 10mmol/L. Specific blood glucose readings taken over the 32-day period 10<sup>th</sup> September to-date average as follows: 6.4 mmol/L (fasting or prior to breakfast) – 9.1 mmol/L (being 2 hours duration from the start of breakfast)... 5.8 mmol/L (prior to evening meal) – 7.0 mmol/L (being 2 hours duration from the start of the meal).

### **My Attitude re Diet v Medication**

- Frankly, my recent studies of this practice by GP's who instinctively want to prescribe potentially harmful medication, is that your inquiry is most opportune. It concurs with my choice of a modified diet being much more preferable and advantageous to curb the effects of diabetes, than it is to rely on pharmaceutical medication. The results since altering my diet since the beginning of August do vindicate that premise.

- When first diagnosed, my GP was quick to recommend an immediate course of Metformin XR1000 medication. In regard to myself and my life-long attitude towards medicinal drugs, I am a person who would even reject the idea of taking Aspirin or whatever, let alone a drug like Metformin. This is a product with obvious potential adverse side-effects, particularly when mixed with other medication, such as the ones I am forced to take on a twice-daily basis for a heart condition suffered 3 years ago.

### Concerns re Dietary Issues

- There appears to be a general consensus that diet alone is thought to be the sole saviour of one's control or management of blood glucose levels. I do believe, especially with a senior person like myself, that other factors influence higher readings...especially when comparing an identical breakfast meal content to one that was consumed the previous day. Precisely the same breakfast at an identical time of day to previous...yet the blood glucose level can be substantially higher in contrast to the day before. Mood? Sleep pattern? Body temperature? Ageing process? And so on. I believe that these to be an imperative consideration in any inquiry, and in regard to a senior person's age...this can curtail or rule out regular (even non-strenuous) exercise to assist with one's health.
- For shoppers to only be expected to focus their attention on nutrition or content tables that a manufacturer or vendor is obliged to include on packaged food, is not nearly enough to ensure a healthy diet. I admit that it does help in making consumers aware, but I question the validity of some of the data in the way it is presented, and ostensibly it is merely generalisation data- i.e. different people...different responses to certain ingredients. And then there is non-packaged food...especially fruit...e.g. many people might not purchase or consume watermelon or rockmelon if they were aware of their high sugar content.
- For concerned or apprehensive consumers to turn to alternatives as opposed to suspect packaged food can also be a serious trap for the unwary...especially when it comes to either baking a cake, or making a dessert in the home kitchen. The majority of home-bake recipes, either those featured in magazines from the major supermarkets or online for cakes or cookies or similar, and desserts e.g. custard, suggest one should include excessive amounts of sugar as an ingredient...e.g. a popular carrot and banana cake recipe calls for the inclusion of 250 grams of sugar i.e. 62.5 teaspoons of sugar or approx.. 6 teaspoons of sugar in every slice...i.e. in addition to the already sweet bananas and carrots, and a cake topping of icing sugar is extra. To make custard powder requires the inclusion of 210 grams of sugar...and so it goes on with any cake baking or dessert making.
- General adherence to a recipe is fine, but when it comes to the ingredients for diabetics, one needs to experiment with quantities of sugar and carbohydrates to achieve a satisfactory balance. In the case of the carrot and banana cake, I personally leave out sugar altogether, and no topping of icing, as the 3 to 4 carrots and 2 to 3 bananas are my sweeteners. Tested recently with guests but without first divulging the lack of sugar... it received a tick of full approval

I trust you will find the above to be useful for the inquiry.

Yours Sincerely,

Robert Lee