

an open letter  
from the  
**Diabetes  
Community**



**about diabetes stigma**

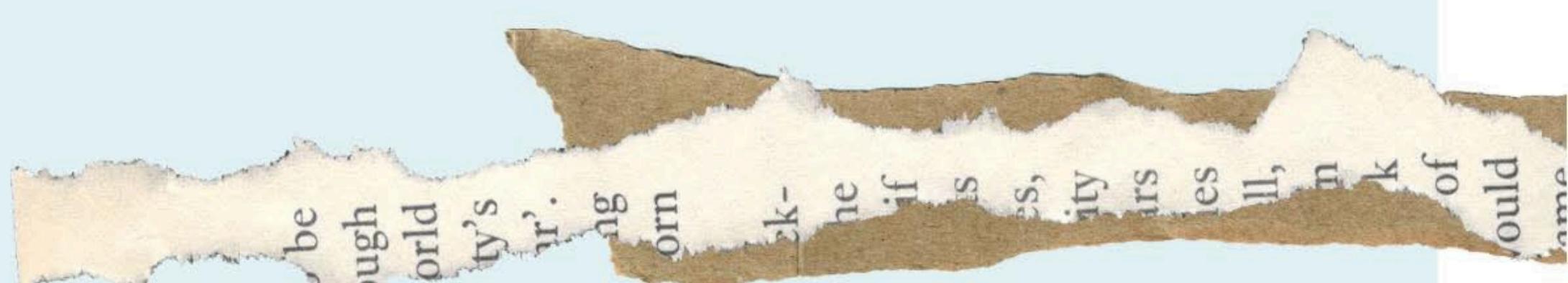
#LanguageMatters

There is stigma associated with **all types of diabetes**, although there may be some differences in the biases that form those stigmas.

We believe that there is a need for people with diabetes to know about and understand our own type of diabetes. We also believe and expect the health professionals we work with, and who care for us, understand the different types of diabetes and the management of the different types differs and where it aligns.

However, we do not believe that reinforcing or perpetuating stigma in efforts to define the different types of diabetes is necessary or of benefit. Type the 'type' but remember that no diabetes is caused because someone eats cake! And no one asks to be diagnosed with any type of diabetes.

Diabetes stigma can lead to discrimination in the workplace, the schoolyard and in families. It affects individuals with diabetes, and it also impacts the diabetes cause. In some parts of the world, a diabetes diagnosis means that people are shunned from their own families and communities.



The issue of **diabetes stigma** holds significant importance and has garnered attention from people with diabetes, healthcare professionals, and researchers. It is widely recognised in the diabetes community that the condition faces an image problem, leading to considerable stigma experienced by people with diabetes.

With a growing evidence base demonstrating just how impactful and harmful **diabetes stigma** can be, and an ever-expanding choir of people affected by diabetes sharing their stories of how dealing with stigma adds significant burden to that already caused by diabetes, it is time to acknowledge we **all** have a role to play in addressing the issue.

And so, we are asking for a **dedicated** and **determined** effort from our health professional allies and partners to join us in our calls to stop diabetes stigma.

There is a concerted approach from many people with diabetes to highlight stigmatising commentary about diabetes in our own lived experience communities, in the media, and in broader society.

We need your help to address it in research and clinical settings.



We are asking you, our healthcare professional and research allies, to work with us in our community's endeavours to stop diabetes stigma. When you see or hear colleagues using language that stigmatises diabetes, **please call it out**. When you see diabetes being misrepresented at diabetes meetings and conferences, **stand up and say something**. We are asking you to be consistent when talking with us and with your colleagues, and to make a commitment to use language that empowers and builds up people with diabetes and positions diabetes as the serious, complex and challenging condition it is. We ask that the language you use doesn't blame or shame those of us living with diabetes.

We understand that challenging your colleagues is not an easy thing to do, but we hope that you will step up with and for us to help change the narrative. If we work together and are aligned in our efforts to address stigma, we believe that we can stamp it out once and for all.

## Are you with us?

