

## LETTER TO EDITOR

### Role of "Life For A Child" in Type 1 diabetes in Kashmir

Dear Editor

Type 1 diabetes is a lifelong condition requiring daily insulin injections, blood glucose monitoring, education and specialist health care. Access to this life-saving treatment is often challenging and sometimes impossible to achieve in under-resourced countries. Without support, many young people die soon after being diagnosed. Those who survive may develop complications, such as eye damage and kidney failure.

Life For A Child (LFAC) is a Charitable organisation based in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, with a motto of "No child should die of diabetes". They support 43 countries and partner with diabetes centres in the under-resourced countries to provide young people with Insulin and syringes, Blood glucose monitoring equipment and test strips, HbA1c testing, Diabetes education, workshops, camps, resources and support for health professionals.

The John Hunter Children's Hospital (JHCH) is internationally recognised for having outstanding patient outcomes in children with type 1 diabetes (SWEET and Australian Diabetes Database Network reports). The JHCH call their program "Success With Individualised Insulin Management" (SWIIM program). The paediatric diabetes team in JHCH has used the SWIIM program at other centres in Australia (Lismore, Grafton, Ballina, Tamworth and Forster). It has achieved an average HbA1c across these centres of 6.9%. Other centres in Australia have also trained with JHCH and now have outstanding outcomes. The aim of

the SWIIM program of JHCH and support from LFAC is to develop a diabetes management program that is appropriate for resource-limited regions to improve the outcomes for children living with type 1 diabetes.

At the Sher-I-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) in Srinagar, India, we have registered around 400 children with type 1 diabetes. The outcomes for children living with type 1 diabetes in Kashmir have been suboptimal. The average HbA1c is 10.5%, and diabetes-related complications are common, with survival after 29 years of age being uncommon. Before 2022 many families attending SKIMS Srinagar couldn't afford test strips, and several had to go without blood glucose monitoring entirely. LFAC is now supporting 500 children and young people in Kashmir. To improve the clinical outcomes of type 1 diabetes in Kashmir, SKIMS has developed an established collaboration with Jhon Hunter Children's Hospital (JHCH) NSW, Newcastle, Australia. It would be fascinating and rewarding if a program similar to SWIIM could be implemented at SKIMS Srinagar.

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