

Press Release

Novo Nordisk and Entertainment Industries Council to Improve Nation's Public Education and Awareness about Diabetes Epidemic Beginning with D.C. Event

Nurse Jackie's Stephen Wallem to serve as celebrity ambassador; entertainment industry outreach to follow.

Washington, DC (June 6, 2011) — Novo Nordisk, a world leader in diabetes care, and the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. (EIC) are expanding upon a collaborative project launched last year to enhance dialogue among diabetes experts, policy makers and the media. The first step in this expansion, a national event called *Picture This: Diabetes*, is taking place in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, June 8, 2011. The project aims to improve public awareness of the key issues associated with diabetes management.

This event, hosted by the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA), will bring together diabetes stakeholders and a panel of entertainment industry representatives to identify the most important diabetes communication priorities and messages to be shared with the Hollywood creative community and national news media.

Stephen Wallem, an actor who is best known for his portrayal of Thor, a character who has diabetes, on Showtime's hit drama *Nurse Jackie* will share his story at the forum. Like his character, Wallem has diabetes and will

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serve as the celebrity ambassador for the project. The expansion of the project will also include local forums in Chicago, Atlanta and Los Angeles that will bring together local stakeholders and news media panelists with a focus on each community's specialized messaging needs. Additionally, outreach to the entertainment creative community will be conducted as well as production of a national PSA and a media tour featuring Wallem.

"Being a part of something like this is huge to me and I welcome it, because it is a constant frustration with me how little people understand about the struggles of the disease," said Wallem.

Entertainment industry panelists include Renee Intlekofer, Writer for *One Tree Hill*; Sandy Isaacs, Writer and Consulting Producer for *Drop Dead Diva*; Duane Tollison, Writer & Editor for CBS Radio News; Mark Stegemann, Writer and Co-Executive Producer for *Men of a Certain Age*; and Wyndham Lewis, Writer for *Nurse Jackie*. The panelists will provide a context for the stakeholders in developing priorities and messages for the creative community. The priorities developed at this forum will be presented to entertainment writers, producers and executives at an entertainment industry briefing in Los Angeles to be held on August 18.

"The collaboration we are embarking on with EIC and the entertainment community is exciting for all of us. We have the ability to bring together our shared expertise and perspectives to identify ways to strengthen understanding about diabetes and hopefully inspire stories that will lead to social change and empower people with diabetes," said Dr. Danilo Verge, Vice President of Medical Affairs at Novo Nordisk.

"The use of entertainment to deliver accurate portrayals of topics such as diabetes can help educate the public in a way that viewers are open to, because they are receiving the message from characters they care about," said Brian Dyak, President & CEO, Entertainment Industries Council. "Popular shows, such as *Nurse Jackie*, can serve as a platform to dispel myths about diabetes and engage the audience through characters with which they can identify."

"We admire the vital work of EIC and support its important objectives of raising awareness through media of major health and social issues," said Rob Stoddard, Sr. VP Communications and Public Affairs for NCTA. "We feel honored to host this meeting and to assist in contributing to its success."

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Diabetes in the United States

Diabetes is the 7th leading cause of death, with an American being diagnosed every 21 seconds. To date, nearly 26 million Americans have diabetes and another 57 million are at risk for developing the disease. On its current course, the number of people with diabetes is projected to nearly double to 44.1 million by 2034 due, in large part, to the aging of the baby boomer population and increased rates of obesity in Americans.

Although diabetes cannot yet be cured, it can be managed. With proper diet, exercise, regular blood sugar testing and treatment therapy, people living with type 2 diabetes can lead full and active lives. If left unmanaged, diabetes can lead to severe health complications, including blindness, kidney disease, foot amputations, heart disease and stroke. Insulin therapy, discovered nearly 90 years ago, remains one of the most significant discoveries in the field of medicine and continues to be a mainstay of diabetes treatment as a way to reduce the risk of developing serious complications.

About Novo Nordisk

Headquartered in Denmark, Novo Nordisk is a global healthcare company with 87 years of innovation and leadership in diabetes care. The company also has leading positions within hemophilia care, growth hormone therapy and hormone replacement therapy. For more information, visit novonordisk-us.com.

About Entertainment Industries Council (EIC)

A non-profit organization, EIC was founded in 1983 by leaders of the entertainment industry to bring the power of the industry to bear on health and social issues. The organization is considered one of the premiere success stories in entertainment education and information resources for entertainment creators, through innovative and time-proven services and methods of "encouraging the art of making a difference" from within the industry.

EIC addresses health issues such as drug, alcohol, and tobacco use and addiction; firearm safety and injury prevention; sun safety and skin cancer prevention; human trafficking; terrorism and homeland security; mental health and mental illness, including bipolar disorder, depression and suicide; diabetes; seat belt use and traffic safety; and HIV/AIDS prevention. For more information, please visit www.eiconline.org.

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