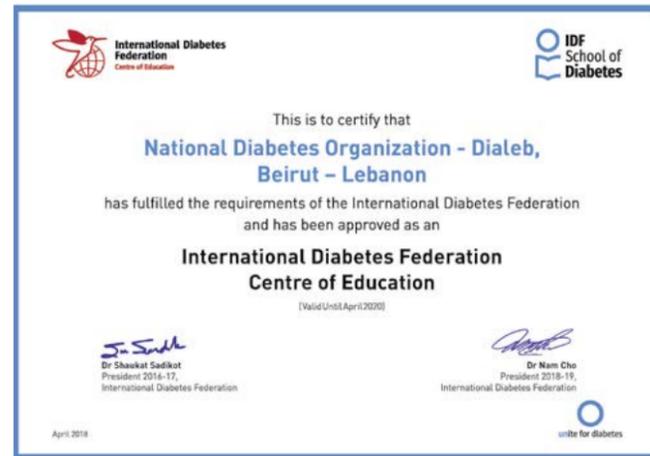


# The National Diabetes Organization - DiaLeb

When I was finishing my PhD, after having four children, I had a feeling that this would be the most I could achieve in life. At that point, I never thought diabetes would be part of my plans. But after the diagnosis of my eldest daughter Sylvie at the age of 24 with Type 1 diabetes, it was like diabetes wanted to be part of my plans and that of my family's as well. After my daughter's diagnosis, we went through the normal phases. First, the shock of the news (she was young, healthy, with a normal body mass index and weight and active!), then the series of doctors and nurses' visits and feeling overwhelmed with all the new information. The adaptation process took some time until finally accepting the fact that Sylvie had to live with diabetes, taking insulin shots, for the rest of her life. Her determination to learn about her condition and move on kept us all determined to stay positive and support her in any way we could. However, finding information and support groups proved difficult and we had to resort to



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American or UK-based associations and patient support forums.

It was then that we started thinking about what we could do to help people living with diabetes in Lebanon. That is how we started with the National Diabetes Organization-DiaLeb. The idea was simple, to increase awareness about diabetes to as many people as possible, and to provide accessible, reliable and credible information to patients. Since then and almost 9 years on, we, at DiaLeb have been working to promote diabetes awareness across Lebanon. Further, **we wanted to create a patient support system to allow people to find others living with diabetes to exchange stories and support each other.** On a personal level, having been through this situation with Sylvie, I am very willing to help and support every mother or family member of a recently diagnosed child/adolescent/young adult with type1 diabetes.

The main reason for starting DiaLeb was definitely Sylvie being diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. However, once I began searching for information about diabetes and after having learned about the large number of people affected around the world, challenges people face when there is



Community Awareness Program DiaLeb

not enough information to manage the complications in uncontrolled diabetes, I started to think that we needed to do more than what we were already doing. It was at that point where we started to structure our programs and divide them into several categories to ensure we maximize our reach. Our set of programs and activities will be discussed in depth later.

DiaLeb works to provide necessary knowledge to communities about the warning risk factors and signs of diabetes. More importantly, **we educate communities on the importance of healthy living, eating a balanced diet and exercising, which can significantly help to avoid diabetes or delay its onset.** Finally, we work with those living with diabetes to ensure they have all the support needed to effectively manage their disease and avoid costly complications.

Given my role, I have also been attending many local and regional conferences and congresses which serve to keep my information updated and to learn from others and exchange ideas on how we, as a patient-centric NGO can perform better towards our Lebanese community.

### DiaLeb's Objectives:

- To raise the awareness and develop communication strategies regarding the need for prevention and the necessity of good diabetes control.
- To disseminate appropriate information and educational

materials.

- To help affected people improve their lives and enhance quality nutrition care.
- To deliver community programs and services to high-risk populations.

### DiaLeb's Work:

**The main goal of the National Diabetes Organization - DiaLeb, is to promote awareness about diabetes.**



Summer Camp for Type 1 Diabetes Patients

