



## #insulin4all: Addressing the Insulin Pricing Crisis in America

### The Issue

- Insulin is as necessary to a person with diabetes as oxygen is to any human being.
- Over 7 million Americans are insulin dependent.
- The 'big three' insulin producers – Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk and Sanofi – dominate more than 90% of the world insulin market by value.
- Since the 1990s, these companies have raised the price of insulin over 1,200%.
- Between 2001 and 2015 the price of Humalog insulin increased 585%.
- Even with insurance, some people are paying \$1,400 per month out-of-pocket for insulin.
- Average total Medicare Part D spending on insulin products increased by 358% between 2007 and 2016, from \$862 to \$3,949.

This is forcing many who cannot afford the cost to resort to drastic measures to stay alive. The unbearable cost means that countless people have to choose between buying their essential insulin and paying their rent, buying food, or other unthinkable sacrifices.

**One of every four** patients with type 1 diabetes has had to ration their insulin due to cost. Many have died because they have been forced to ration, such as Alec Smith who died at the age of 26.

### What is Being Done?

Across the world, individuals have united to speak up against these prices. Groups of volunteers are uniting, with support from T1International, to form grassroots #insulin4all Chapters that work with state and federal elected officials to bring legislative action to put an end to the insulin price crisis.

#### *Legislative Successes*

In 2017, **Nevada passed Senate Bill 539**, which requires insulin manufacturers to report costs and profits and to notify the state before planned price increases.

That same year, **California passed Senate Bill 17**, which will allow health insurers to negotiate prices on drugs, require pharmaceutical manufacturers to notify the state before planned price increases, provide information that would justify any price increase, and disclose marketing costs.

In 2018, **Vermont and Oregon both passed bills (SB 216 and HB 4005, respectively)** that require manufacturers to justify price hikes on some of the most expensive medications. Other states have passed various forms of legislation addressing high prescription drug costs.

## **What We Are Asking**

### ***Transparency***

We request legislation to require insulin manufacturers, pharmacy benefit managers, and insurance plans to disclose information, including profits, expenditures, and other factors to explain increases in drug pricing. We believe transparency is the first step to addressing this extortionate pricing and getting to the root cause of a complex industry that allows these unconscionable prices to continue.

### ***Importation***

In 2019, several states have brought forth legislation to allow importation of medication, including insulin, from Canada. Vermont passed Senate Bill 175 in 2018 to allow for importation. We recognizes that importation would be a short-term solution to safely bring affordable medications to America.

### ***Patient Advocacy Organizations***

We are asking for transparency from non-profit Patient Advocacy Organizations (PAOs) who accept funds from pharmaceutical manufacturers. PAOs are meant to represent patients' best interest and yet their conflicts of interest continue to stop them from addressing the pricing crisis fully.

### ***Federal Action***

We encourage national efforts to allow Medicare and Medicaid to negotiate pharmaceutical prices. High prices also affect our state and federal budgets, forcing legislators to make hard choices between spending on things like education and other health priorities. As with state-level efforts to ask for drug price transparency, we support federal legislative efforts, including Senate and House hearings to investigate the insulin price crisis.

## **Resistance from Special Interest Lobbying Groups**

### ***"It's Complicated" Rhetoric***

Manufacturers, PBMs, and insurers claim that pricing issues are complicated and that legislation will not fix the issues. Each entity blames each other for high prices while not taking responsibility for their actions. All industry players, starting with manufacturers, must be held accountable.

### ***Patient Assistance Programs***

Special interests also claim that they have patient assistance programs that help. Unfortunately, many people with diabetes do not qualify for these programs and still pay high prices.

### ***Research and Development***

Insulin manufacturers claim that high prices are needed to fund research and development of new medication. We understand that R&D can be very expensive, but the insulin types that are increasing in price have been around for decades.

## **Learn More**

T1International takes no funding from pharmaceutical or diabetes device companies in order to avoid conflicts of interest and to ensure independent advocacy. We will work with advocates until affordable insulin is a reality for all. Visit [www.t1international.com/usa](http://www.t1international.com/usa) to learn more.