

What does your MP know about type 1 diabetes?

Will they support funding for CGM technology to improve the lives of t1d's?

Step - by - step

lobbying toolkit

Improving the safety and quality of the lives of
Australians with type 1 diabetes



DANII Foundation: The Face of Type 1 Diabetes

Meet Your MP



In just over 1 year of advocacy the DANII Foundation was pivotal in achieving funding for CGM technology for Australians under 21 living with Type 1 diabetes. Our promise to support EVERY Australian remains. The best way to achieve this is to share your story with your local Federal MP and personally ask them to support CGM funding for all t1d's.

It is easy for MPs to hide behind 'party policies' when responding to your letter. Are you sick of the 'form' response? A face to face meeting enables you to seek their personal views and understand just what is like living with or supporting someone with type 1 diabetes.

A face to face meeting provides you with the opportunity to:

- Provide your story and solutions for views directly to your MP.
- Set the record straight on some of the Most common misconceptions of t1d (as opposed to t2d)
- Explicitly ask them how they are going to publicly demonstrate their support for t1d's

The idea of meeting with your MP might feel a bit daunting, but remember their job is to represent YOU. Many MP's have become passionate about issues simply by hearing the stories of their constituents. Without the support of locals, they risk losing their job. Therefore they will listen to your concerns.

This simple step-by-step guide will arm you with all the information and tools you need to have a productive meeting and support DANII's call of improving the lives of t1d's NOW. We are not waiting for a cure.

Requesting Your Meeting

Do you know who your local Federal MP is? If not [you can find them here.](#)

Make the request in writing

Virtually all MP's will require a written request you to put your request for a meeting in a letter, email or fax. Your message doesn't need to be long. Simply include:

- who you are
- the fact you live in their electorate
- what you wish to discuss with the *MP personally*: i.e. Supporting adults with t1d, your experience of CGM
- that you request a meeting as soon as possible
- who else, if anyone, will be attending the meeting With you, and
- Your contact details for them to respond and arrange the meeting.

Before your Meeting

If you can - gather additional local support. Is there a t1d group or other families you know?

There is no better way to show your MP that many people in their electorate support your work than by starting a petition. If the MP sees a number of locals emailing him via the [#NoMoreFear campaign](#) they are more likely to support your requests. Let your friends and family and even neighbours know of your meeting. Ask them to [sign the DANII petition](#) to support your work.

Know your facts

[Our handy fact sheet](#) will give you a good background on the facts regarding CGM funding and evidence of health improvements. YOUR story however is the most powerful example of the need to act.

Get to know your MP

To get the most out of your meeting it's a good idea to find out information about your MP through their party's website, or their social media (Facebook and Twitter pages). Many also have a regular column in the local newspaper or speak to local radio.

Follow up with a call

Demonstrate how important getting a meeting is to you by following up your letter with a phone call. Simply confirm that they received your letter and tell them that you are looking forward to their response.

Being persistent pays off!

Sometimes securing a meeting with an MP can be difficult. If you haven't received a response within 7 days of writing, follow up with another phone call. Ask to speak to the 'diary manager' about an existing meeting request. Do not accept a meeting with an adviser. If your request is rejected, don't give up. Every letter and phone call to try to secure a meeting is itself a reminder to them that people are concerned about type 1 diabetes and that the MP's support is important. By persisting and being friendly and respectful, you've got a good chance of securing a meeting.

Helpful information to know

Here are a few things that would be very helpful to know about your local Federal MP.

- which party they are in
- how to pronounce their name
- how to address them (e.g. Minister, Dr, Mr, Ms)
- how long they've been in Parliament
- whether they hold any position in Parliament
- whether they are on any relevant committees, and
- whether they have supported diabetes in the past

A picture speaks a thousand words

Your story or that of your family is powerful. It is always a good idea to leave a visual impact with the MP. Do you have a particular relevant image, something that really speaks to your experience and why you need their support? If so bring a spare copy with you to leave.

At your meeting

Strength in numbers?

If you have friends in your electorate who are also t1d's, then you might like to invite them to come with you. A group of roughly 2-4 people is perfect. It is OK to attend this meeting on your own. You will just need to advise the MP in advance of all those attending the meeting.

First impressions count

First impressions can really affect how your message is received. When you meet your MP, introduce yourself and thank them for their time. Speak clearly and keep good eye contact. While your passion for supporting t1d's will help convey your concern and leave a lasting impression, remember to balance that passion with a polite manner.

Your message needs to be clear

Remember you are actually the expert here. You are living with type 1 diabetes. Your job is for your MP to gain an insight and empathy, enough to support your 'ask'. Politicians are busy and have many competing interests. Before going into the meeting with your MP, make sure you are clear on the key message/questions you want to get across. In a nutshell, it is essential for politicians to know the impacts of t1d, the flow on effects to many more than the person living with t1d and the cost, not just to you but the taxpayer.

What is your 'ask'?

The Foundation's ask is clear. Every Australian with type 1 diabetes deserves the safety and improved wellbeing of CGM technology. Currently this is only available to some t1d's under 21. This is a fantastic start but adults too deserve access. How can your MP work to see funding for those over 21 as well? If you have CGM for a child, let them know how it has changed your/your child's life. Have you trialled CGM? Let them know what it is like with it and without. Don't be afraid to tell them you are scared and how much t1d affects your life. **A briefing has been prepared for you** to provide to your MP.

Get a commitment

Ask your MP if they are prepared to present an adjournment speech outlining the importance of supporting t1d's. Will they represent your concerns to the Minister/Shadow Minister? What steps will they take to see funding realised? At the end of your meeting – regardless of how it went – thank your MP once again for taking the time to see you; ask for the business cards of any advisors present; **(send contacts to Justine Caines)** and re-emphasise the key point to your MP that the life of a t1d and their loved ones is impacted 24/7. Technology is somewhat expensive, but hospital admissions, serious complications and mental health is more expensive.

Key issues and questions to cover

- Both major parties support CGM funding. The Government via the funding commitment for under 21's and the ALP via their election commitment to under 21's, pregnant women and select t1d's over 21.
- Positive impacts are already very evident from those already benefiting from the funded program. **Show your MP the feedback page of DANII friends across the country**
- If you are without CGM tell your MP how your ongoing health is impacted. Hospital admissions, times away from work, family member support, inability to work, issues re parenting, complications and damage, mental health issues.
- Let them know that while a cure would be fantastic, waiting and not improving daily life is both expensive to the health system and can be deadly
- A leading cause of death in t1d's under 40 years is Dead in Bed Syndrome
- With only 3 days spent in hospital per annum a CGM can be paid for.
- CGM technology has the capacity to save lives, with secondary alarm capacity. It is the most effective technology to date.
- The cost in lives and daily quality does not justify simply waiting for a cure.

Maximising impact

MP's respond to community pressure, in other words if they can see votes in an issue they are likely to respond. Ask if you can take a photo with your MP. It is always great to maximise the impact of the meeting by posting it on social media (linking to your own the MP's and the DANII Foundation pages). A simple snap on your phone is fine. Another way to create more impact is via local media. You can flag that you would like to engage with local media and include your MP at your meeting. This really assists to keep their focus on delivering something!

After You're Meeting

Follow-up. Send a follow up email/letter to your MP, thanking them for the meeting. Outline your key message again, include any further information you promised to send to them and tell them that you look forward to hearing from them about how they will directly support improving the lives of t1d's.

Tell us how you went. We would love to hear how you went! Please let us know. We'd also welcome any other feedback or impressions on the experience and the tools developed. Please send any feedback to: **justine.caines@gmail.com**

By making it this far and meeting with your MP you have made a fantastic contribution to our advocacy campaign on behalf of the DANII Foundation, THANK YOU.

Senators are important too

Senators also play a role, especially those on the cross bench. You can find your Senators (12 for each state and 2 for ACT/NT) **[here](#)**

If you have any questions the DANII Foundation Lobbyist is here to help. Justine Caines can be reached by email **Justine.caines@gmail.com** or 0408210273.