

Francis Zammit Dimech

Member of the European Parliament
Group of the European People's Party

26th June, 2018

Hon. Dr. Chris Fearne
Minister for Health

Dear Hon. Fearne,

On 3 April 2018, I wrote you a letter to bring to your attention remarks made by patients suffering from Type 1 diabetes. I had urged to you explore the possibility of providing, to those in genuine need, affordable Continuous Glucose Monitors (CGMs) that effectively waive the need to draw blood several times a day. Despite the Government's pledge to start providing CGMs as of this legislature, as things stand, these monitors are not yet freely available to diabetic patients, except to those who are able to afford them. Thus, patients have to be pricked several times a day to monitor their glucose level.

This time I would like to bring to your attention another remark made by a number of persons who approached me especially relatives of young Type 1 diabetics. The government is providing free 6mm pen needles for glucose injections. It is generally painful for the child to be injected (several times a day) with such a needle. An alternative that inflicts much less pain is to use 4mm pen needles. In fact I have been informed that relatives of Type 1 diabetic children have been purchasing pen needles at a cost of €11 per pack of 100 pen needles for the sole purpose of minimising pain and trauma on their children. I urge you to make such needles available at least until the Continuous Glucose Monitors are made available. I take this opportunity to once again appeal for the CGMs to be made available for free without further delays.

I trust your good self to commit your energy towards this substantial part of the Maltese population suffering from diabetes. Given the high incidence of diabetes in our country, I recently suggested that perhaps time is ripe for the re-establishment of a Parliamentary Committee on Diabetes (either as a committee or as a sub-committee); a suggestion I would like to reiterate here for your consideration.

While I thank you for your time, I remain,

Yours faithfully



Francis Zammit Dimech
Member of the European Parliament