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{Insert Date}

{Insert Decision Maker Name & Address}

Re: COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization for People with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D)

Dear {Decision Maker}:

As one of the estimated 300,000 people in Canada living with type 1 diabetes (T1D), {I / w respectfully ask you to include people with diabetes among the populations defined as extremely clinically vulnerable to be prioritized during COVID-19 vaccination roll-out plans in {province/territory}. Ontario's recently updated vaccination plan now includes those living with diabetes as a priority population for earlier vaccine access in Phase 2 of a three-phase plan. Other provinces and territories must follow suit.

{I / W applaud the healthcare workers, researchers and so many others who have helped our community during this pandemic and are now bringing us life-saving vaccines. {I / W strongly support the initial prioritization of healthcare personnel and residents and staff of long-term care facilities, and also urge decision makers to prioritize health equity in their vaccine distribution plans, given the disparate impact COVID-19 has had.

That said, today {I / want to draw attention to the latest research, which shows COVID-19 has taken a significant toll on the diabetes community. A recent study conducted by researchers at Vanderbilt University shows that people with diabetes – whether type 1 or type 2 – who develop COVID-19 have three to four times higher risk of severe illness and hospitalization, compared to people without diabetesⁱ. Other research shows that even young, otherwise healthy patients with T1D who become infected with COVID-19 remain at an increased risk for poor outcomes, such as hospitalization due to diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA), which is a life-threatening complication of the disease. In a multicenter study by the US T1D Exchange, 47% of patients with T1D who were hospitalized with COVID-19 had DKAⁱⁱ. Finally, an English study found that the risk of in-hospital death from COVID-19 was more than three

times higher for patients with T1D and more than two times higher for patients with type 2 diabetes versus those with no diabetes.ⁱⁱⁱ These are just examples of the dozens of studies that have highlighted that people with diabetes are at high risk of poor outcomes and death from COVID-19 compared with the general population, and which have informed the roll-out schemes of other countries that are prioritizing people with diabetes for COVID-19 vaccines, such as the UK.

JDRF Canada has been in direct contact with Health Canada and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) to present these and other findings, requesting prioritization and re-categorization for those living with diabetes.

Given the higher risks of severe illness and hospitalization from COVID-19, {I/w join the chorus of others in urging you to prioritize access to the COVID-19 vaccine for those living with diabetes.

Thank you for considering our request, and for your leadership during this public health crisis. Please contact me {insert name / contact info / city} with any questions on this important issue.

Sincerely,

{insert name}

ⁱ Gregory et al. COVID-19 Severity is Tripled in the Diabetes Community: A Prospective Analysis of the Pandemic's Impact in Type 1 & Type 2 Diabetes. *Diabetes Care*, 2021. **44**: 526-532. [doi: 10.2337/dc20-2260](https://doi.org/10.2337/dc20-2260).

ⁱⁱ O'Malley et al. Diabetes 2 COVID-19 Hospitalization in Adults with Type 1 Diabetes: Results from the T1D Exchange Multicenter Surveillance Study. *J Clin Endocrinol Metab*. 2021. **23**: e936-e942. [doi: 10.1210/clinem/dgaa825](https://doi.org/10.1210/clinem/dgaa825).

ⁱⁱⁱ Barron et al. Associations of type 1 and type 2 diabetes with COVID-19 related mortality in England: a whole population study. *Lancet Diabetes Endocrinol*. 2020. **8**: 813-822. [doi: 10.1016/S2213-8587\(20\)30272-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-8587(20)30272-2).