

Mr Nathan Gill MEP
European Parliament
ASP 3F155
60 Rue Wiertz
1047 Brussels
Belgium

The Rt. Honourable Theresa May MP
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA
United Kingdom

Tuesday 13th March 2018, Brussels

Dear Madam Prime Minister Theresa May,

I write to you first and foremost as a fellow insulin dependent diabetic.

I was diagnosed as diabetic in 2012 and immediately after diagnosis decided to make major lifestyle changes to reduce my insulin dependency.

Current government advice recommends that people put starchy carbohydrates at the base of their diet. These guidelines are absolutely wrong and have been a major contributor to the increase in obesity-related illness in the UK over the past three decades. I have now concluded that this advice and the promotion of “low fat” foods through a change in the UK government advice in 1983 following the USA in 1977 has been a thirty five year diet fad that has replaced millennia of eating satiating and nutritious full fat whole foods with disastrous consequences for public health.

Having followed a very low sugar diet by drastically reducing my own intake of carbohydrates straight after diagnosis I was able to completely erase the need to take metformin. As a result, I did not require insulin injections for well over a year. After I let my diet revert to its prior patterns my dependency on insulin increased.

After reading eminent British Consultant Cardiologist Dr Aseem Malhotra’s evidence-based lifestyle medicine book, *The Pioppi Diet* and having met Dr Malhotra in person, I cannot express how much my life has changed for the better by following his recommendations that pinpoint sugar consumption above 2 teaspoons a day per adult as potentially damaging to health. Current Government guidelines have allowed for ten times this recommended dietary allowance.

My blood sugars are not only significantly more stable, but I have managed to reduce my insulin requirements by almost 50% which, I’m sure you will agree, is quite extraordinary.

Dr Malhotra has a great many testimonials and high level endorsements from across the medical profession that show how thousands of patients are not only better managing their diabetes, and in the case of Type 2 diabetics, even reversing it.

The endorsements given by respected international scientists and dieticians include the chair of the medical royal colleges and former President of the Royal College of Physicians and personal physician to Her Majesty the Queen for 21 years, Sir Richard Thompson.

The book was lauded in the UK Parliament shortly after its launch by the chair of the All Party Parliamentary Diabetes Group, who called for 100 MPs with the highest prevalence of Type 2 diabetes to follow Dr Malhotra's lifestyle plan over the summer.

Former Secretary of State for Health and Mayor of Manchester Andy Burnham described the book as having the "power to make millions of people healthier and happier".

Beyond Type 1 diabetes it also is the best dietary pattern to reduce obesity Type 2 diabetes and as the below testimonials reveal is now being successfully adopted in the NHS for heart patients.

As you may already know, Dr Malhotra has been at the forefront of raising awareness of the harms of excess sugar consumption and has been the most influential doctor in the UK that pushed for a sugary drinks tax that will come into fruition in April in the UK.

His campaign to raise awareness of the effect of diet and lifestyle on health has been described as "inspirational" by Jamie Oliver.

Writing in the British Medical Journal in 2013, Dr Malhotra's own analysis of research and investigation exposed that in Europe and the UK labelling on sugar was in effect advising people to consume 22 and a half tea spoons of sugar a day.

Following an investigation by the *Sunday Times* and Channel 4's *Dispatches* it later emerged that several members of the Government's Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition had financial ties to sugar manufacturers.

Dr Malhotra explained to me that regulators, academic institutions, charities and organisations that have a responsibility to patients and should exhibit the highest standards of transparency and scientific integrity, instead collude with big pharmaceuticals and the food and drinks industry for financial gain to the severe detriment of public health.

As a British citizen, a diabetic and as a politician I find this utterly unacceptable. Having personally improved my own health significantly by ignoring the official government dietary guidelines, which I have now clearly realised are not based on independent science, I urge you to do the same if you are not doing so already.

The history of tobacco control should have taught us that legislation to reduce the availability, affordability and acceptability of smoking had the biggest impact in reducing the consumption of cigarettes, and had this occurred decades earlier, when the first scientific studies linking smoking and lung cancer were published millions of premature deaths from lung cancer and heart disease could have been prevented.

I also believe that we all have a role to play in helping to solve the current healthcare crisis. Politicians especially have the greatest impact to ensure that policies are evidence based and through legislation can protect children and the public from the excesses of industries whose primary motive is profit. With increasing revelations as to the public health impact of the obesity crisis, lifestyle medicine of which Dr Malhotra is a pioneer is more vital today than at any other time.

We are also simultaneously facing a crisis of an overmedicated population. In the UK, almost half of all adults are taking at least one prescription medication and 70% of those aged over 75 are on at least three. It is estimated that prescribed medication is the third most common cause of death after heart disease and cancer.

With an ongoing funding crisis in the NHS, the future of our public health will necessarily need to shift the balance away from medicines that have marginal gains at best marginal and come with side effects to that of using lifestyle as a first line intervention. The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges have started a campaign entitled Choosing Wisely to wind back the harms of too much medicine

which encourages more transparent conversations with patients in addition to placing patient values and preferences first when it comes to individualised treatment. Dr Malhotra will be donating all personal royalties from sales of the book to this campaign which he believes holds the solution to improving quality of care and value in the NHS.

If all diabetic patients were to follow The Pioppi Diet, and also reduce their dependency on insulin by over 50%, this would save the NHS hundreds of millions of pounds. Diabetes medication costs the NHS close to a billion pounds per year. Combined costs to the NHS and to the economy of diabetes due to lost productivity is approximately £20 billion and unless we take control this is estimated to reach £40 billion in less than 20 years.

On Thursday April 12th I am hosting a talk by Dr Malhotra entitled *Big Food and Big Pharma, Killing for Profit?* in the European Parliament, where Dr Malhotra will make the case very clear for why the system needs reform, why lifestyle medicine must be at the forefront of improving global health and what we can all do to better inform the public.

He will state that simple policy changes would exponentially improve population health and increase economic productivity.

I understand you have a great many commitments, but I would strongly personally recommend you take the time to look into Dr Malhotra's work for I am without doubt you too would be able to personally endorse his medical advice, optimise your own health and in doing so see the urgency in ensuring public health guidelines are in step to combat the spread of this debilitating disease throughout our population.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr Nathan Gill, MEP for Wales