



David Kerr
Editor-in-Chief

Bon voyage

“There is science, logic, reason; there is thought verified by experience. And then there is California.”

Edward Abbey

The Editorial base camp for *Diabetes Digest* is about to relocate to the sunny shores of the west coast of the United States as your Editor-in-Chief is joining Sansum Diabetes Research Institute (SDRI) in Santa Barbara, California, USA. SDRI is already world famous for its artificial pancreas research and expertise on diabetes and pregnancy, but it is now looking to explore new areas of research and innovation in partnership with the University of California, USA, Santa Barbara campus.

One major focus of innovation at SDRI will be the development of a personalised computing cloud so that information from devices (such as glucose monitoring and insulin delivery systems) can be stored for analysis by both the person with diabetes and their healthcare team. The key is to make it possible for any device to communicate through the cloud irrespective of who the manufacturer is, thereby moving away from the idea that each device must have its own downloadable software, which is different from the next.

The SDRI also has plans to work with online diabetes communities (DiabetesMine.com) to improve the value of diabetes-related apps for smartphones. A recent report (Wicklund, 2014) found that, although there are already more than 1000 diabetes apps available for people with diabetes who own smartphones, only about 1.2% of people use these apps!! In light of this, one aim is to establish an app-reviewing process, especially for apps with gamification aspects (e.g. whether they follow the rules and strategy for effective gamification). The app-reviewing process will also consider whether apps designed for people with diabetes are built on evidence-based medicine and whether they include an educational component. The next step will be to ask people with diabetes to complete a hands-on assessment of apps to gather user reviews. The idea is then to create an online database where people can get some guidance on the apps based on these three criteria (i.e. a gamification aspect, built on evidence-based medicine and includes an

educational component).

The other major innovation of the SDRI will be the development of what has been called the “*Diabetes Moments*” concept. The idea is to re-engineer the current approach to type 1 diabetes care and, instead, look at what it means to live with type 1 diabetes as a whole: where life events can impact the ability for people to maintain good control and avoid hypoglycaemia. The vision is to build a library of *Diabetes Moments* (or experiences), a site where people with diabetes can find information and an approach to personalising their care, and eventually make it a social platform so it can be shared with family members, the clinical teams and others. The first two sites are already up and running: VoyageMD.com, a site focusing on travel and diabetes, and ExCarbs.com, which relates to exercise and insulin. More will follow soon.

So with my move to the US, there will, hopefully, be an opportunity to use the power of technology and new methods of communication to deliver better care, but, at the same time, move the artificial pancreas research out of the lab and into the clinic. Through our new US connections at *Diabetes Digest*, we will continue to keep our readers informed not only of the latest developments in research but also in innovation for people living with diabetes, which will hopefully allow them early access to the new technologies that are about to appear.

Bon voyage ■

Wicklund E (2014) So many diabetes apps but so few users. *mHealthNews*, Berlin, Germany. Available at: <http://bit.ly/1erZsqj> (accessed 04.03.14)

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