

### Prospects for Research in Diabetes Mellitus

To the Editor: In identifying research opportunities in diabetes mellitus, Dr Olefsky<sup>1</sup> has set an excellent agenda for basic research. Unfortunately, Olefsky ignored the need for applied research in this major and costly public health problem. Several efficacious interventions are already available that, if properly applied, could reduce the burden of diabetes complications and increase the quality of life for people with diabetes. However, these interventions are seldom implemented optimally in practice and are inconsistently offered across the United States.<sup>2</sup> Applied research on why this is so and what can be done to improve the application of efficacious treatments is as important as basic research. A parallel agenda for applied diabetes research, similar to that for basic research proposed by Olefsky, is needed.

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1. Olefsky JM. Prospects for research in diabetes mellitus. *JAMA*. 2001;285:628-632.
2. Narayan KM, Gregg EW, Engelgau MM, et al. Translation research for chronic disease: the case of diabetes. *Diabetes Care*. 2000;23:1794-1798.

This letter was shown to Dr Olefsky, who declined to respond.—Ed.