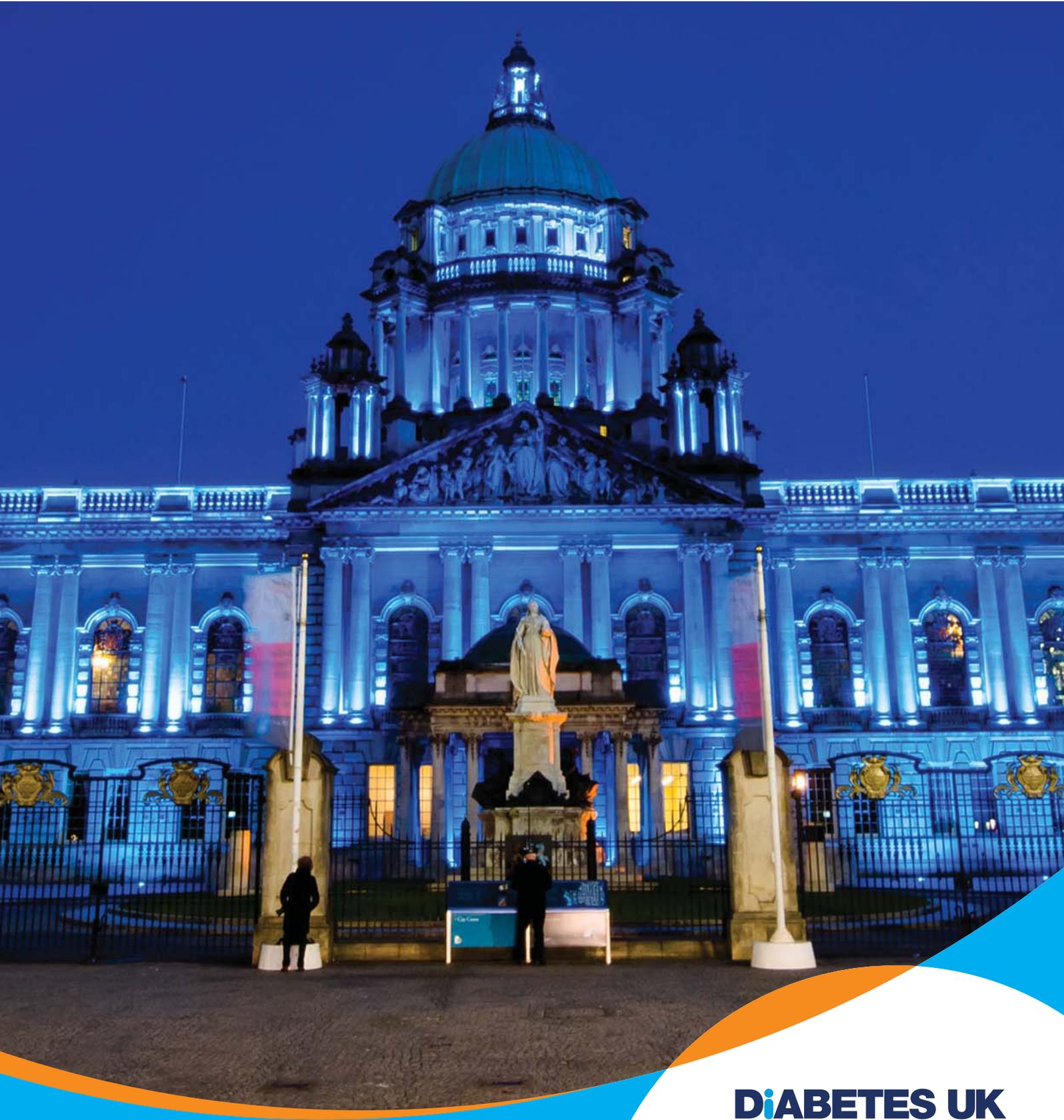


Your **DIABETES UK NORTHERN IRELAND** newsletter **WINTER 2019**

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DIABETES UK
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.
NORTHERN IRELAND

Hello



As we approach the end of 2019 it is always good to take the opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved to date and think about our plans for 2020 and beyond. This is especially pertinent this year with the launch of our new strategy outlining our organisational priorities for the next five years.

At the heart of our strategy, what motivates us every day, and what drives us towards our vision of a world where diabetes can do no harm, are two ambitions.

- » We want people to live well and longer with diabetes
- » We want to cure or prevent diabetes

Two years ago we held the biggest ever conversation about diabetes – the Future of Diabetes. We heard from more than 9,000 people across the UK who described their experiences of living with all types of diabetes and shared their hopes and fears for the future. People told us what they want and need. Their experiences frame our strategy for the next five years.

Our ambitions are grounded in what people living with type 1, type 2 and all other types of diabetes, or people at risk of diabetes, have told us they want for themselves and for others. And, whatever your personal situation or connection with diabetes, I hope our ambitions reflect something important to you. Because of the scale and seriousness of diabetes, we must move quickly. We can only do this if we can inspire more people to raise more money and awareness, influence at the top level and learn more from people whose voices are underrepresented in our work.

I would encourage you to access our new strategy document online to understand more fully where we will be focusing our efforts over the next five years. See Page 11 for a quick overview of our new strategy. One of the biggest changes in our strategy is our focus on outcomes. By doing this we will be able to truly relate our work more clearly to the needs of people

living with diabetes.

But what of our work to date in Northern Ireland?

In 2016 we witnessed the launch of the Diabetes Strategic Framework something we had been striving to achieve for a number of years. Since then there have been a number of improvements to diabetes services in Northern Ireland. These include:

- » Additional staff for management of diabetes during pregnancy
- » Introduction of standardised screening for gestational diabetes across all 5 Trusts in Northern Ireland
- » Roll out of a New National Diabetes Prevention Programme
- » Increased investment in Insulin Pump therapy
- » Introduction of standardised Structured Diabetes Education programmes across all 5 Health and Social Care Trusts
- » Introduction of a standardised management protocol of Diabetic Ketoacidosis across all 5 Health and Social Care Trusts
- » And most recently the introduction of the Diabetes Footcare Pathway across Northern Ireland which will ensure all people with diabetes have access to proper foot screening and the care they need when they need it, avoiding the devastating impact of amputation

Over the last year we have seen almost £5 million pound investment in diabetes care in Northern Ireland to support development of many of the initiatives highlighted above and whilst

this is a great achievement, there is still a lot more to do.

Over the next year we will be pushing for Northern Ireland to join the National Diabetes Audit, a promise made in the 2016 Strategic Framework and reiterated in the Department's response to the Audit Office Report on Type 2 diabetes. It is essential that we monitor and report on the care delivered to people living with diabetes in order that we can be sure what we are doing is working and improves diabetes outcomes.

Finally although we have seen a lot of investment in insulin pump therapy we are aware of the many people who remain unable to access this and other technologies in a timely manner. We will therefore be working hard and influencing the Diabetes Network to introduce a properly resourced nationally agreed insulin pump therapy service. This service needs to deliver consistent high quality care irrespective of where a person lives or which clinic they attend.

None of this is possible without you, our many supporters who give of your time to volunteer, fundraise and support our work across the year. We look forward to working with you again in 2020 and continuing our journey towards a world where diabetes can do no harm.

Thank you for all your support.

Dr David Chaney
Assistant Director for Local
Impact, Diabetes UK

Clinical Champion Pharmacist's Perspective

Guest Contributor:
Rosemary Donnelly
Diabetes Pharmacist South
Eastern Health & Social Care Trust

The Diabetes UK Clinical Champions Programme is an opportunity for healthcare professionals with a clinical expertise in diabetes to develop leadership skills to improve the care provided to people living with diabetes within their local area.

I first heard about the programme in 2018 when attending the Diabetes UK Professional Conference. I was immediately struck by the enthusiasm of current Champions and the wonderful achievements the programme had delivered over the years. While undertaking busy clinical roles these dedicated health care professionals have, for example, trained thousands of their peers, developed innovative new clinics and helped reduce diabetes medication errors. Their efforts have no doubt resulted in and contributed to improving the care we are providing to people living with diabetes.

After speaking with Diabetes UK representatives and attending a lunchtime session to raise awareness I felt that I really needed to learn more about the Clinical Champion Programme. Back at work I did some further reading and spoke with local Champions, current and previous. The knowledge I collated affirmed my decision; I would apply for the opportunity to become a Clinical Champion. If successful I would be the first Diabetes UK Clinical Champion in the diabetes team at the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (SET) and the first pharmacist Clinical Champion in Northern Ireland. In March 2019, with support from my diabetes team I tentatively completed my application and nervously attended for interview. I was delighted to receive a telephone call from the Clinical Champions Programme Manager, Aifric Muller, to confirm that I had been successful. I experienced mixed emotions disbelief, excitement, apprehension and nervousness. But overwhelmingly I recognised that I was very privileged to be afforded this fantastic opportunity. I was therefore determined to make the

most of this; for the people with diabetes that I care for, my diabetes team, my profession and finally myself.

Over the 2 year programme my aim is to improve insulin safety by “empowering prescribers to empower patients and fellow professionals”. To help me successfully deliver on this I will receive formal leadership training at the world-leading Ashridge Business School along with support and encouragement from Diabetes UK and Novo Nordisk mentors, the SET and my diabetes and clinical pharmacy teams. In addition to meeting twice per year with a team of multi-professional Clinical Champions from across the UK, I will attend ‘Action Learning Set’ meetings where in smaller groups, champions will encourage and support each other to reflect upon how best to tackle any important organisational issues or problems they are encountering with their projects. Throughout the programme I will also learn how to use leadership skills to share best practice and to liaise with local decision makers to ensure diabetes is at the top of the health care agenda.

I am required to dedicate approximately eight hours each month to my role as a clinical champion. During this time I will develop ideas on how to implement my project.

When I deliver the project aims I want to improve:

- » the experiences of SET in-patients who are prescribed insulin, respecting their right to be involved in their own care.
- » the education of foundation doctors, pharmacist and nurse prescribers; providing them with



the skills to handle the inherent complexity and uncertainty of prescribing.

- » the appropriateness of insulin prescriptions that are written, increasing the number of ‘good diabetes days’.

In achieving this I believe the reward for people with diabetes will be an improved and safer experience as inpatients in the SET. It will benefit SET foundation doctors and non-medical prescribers, providing better support to allow safer insulin prescribing. Ultimately, as a team we hope to provide data to show that errors in insulin prescribing are falling.

On a personal note I am confident that during my time as a Clinical Champion I will develop skills to effectively influence diabetes care within my local area. My ambition is that by effectively delivering this service improvement project on insulin safety I can encourage other members of the SET diabetes team and diabetes pharmacists across NI to consider participating in this highly respected leadership programme.



Are you living with diabetes?

Would you be happy to share your experiences?



Diabetes UK Northern Ireland is always looking for people living with diabetes to share their story and their experiences to help others understand the condition better. Diabetes is often misunderstood and this can cause a lot of frustration and upset – help us set the record straight.

We would be interested in hearing from people living with Type 2 diabetes or those who have had difficulties in accessing care/treatment, in particular accessing insulin pumps or Flash technology.

If you would be interested then please email n.ireland@diabetes.org.uk.



Q&A

WITH Philip Mynes

Q1 Tell us a little about yourself

I'm Phil and I've been the Policy and Care Improvement Manager for Diabetes UK NI since September. I'm married to Gemma and have a one month old son, Odhrán.

I've worked in policy and campaigning in the charity sector for approximately eight years. I have previously worked at NICVA, the umbrella group for the sector in Northern Ireland, as well as Marie Curie, the terminal illness charity.

Q2 What are you most looking forward to in your new role?

I'm most looking forward to rolling my sleeves up working to Diabetes UK's new strategy. Our new strategy, which David has already outlined, is really a turning point of the impact we can make to the real lives of people living with or at risk of diabetes in Northern Ireland.

I'm also looking forward to getting to know better, learning from and working with the charity's committed staff and volunteers from across Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

Q3 What are your biggest professional challenges?

I have found, in various roles, that Northern Ireland has a particular problem with data collection. With the right data collected, we can use it to better campaign for people living with diabetes. The picture is improving and there are many people working hard on it, but it still remains a challenge.

The lack of a functioning Assembly and Executive is stifling progress. There are many difficult issues on which our politicians need the space to discuss and reach agreement, but it's important they get back round the talks table so decisions affecting the health and wellbeing of everyone in Northern Ireland can be made by Ministers as soon as possible.

And, of course, dare I mention the B-word, which is using a significant amount of Government and civil service bandwidth...anyway, moving swiftly on....

Q4 What do you like to do when you're not at the office?

Normally I'd have said outside of work I love little better than going on a long walk and can usually be found somewhere on the Belfast Hills or at the Loughshore at Whiteabbey, if I'm not watching football or bingeing on Netflix in the house.

However that's all been swapped for for changing nappies and feeding!

Q5 What's the best piece of advice you were ever given?

Treat others as you'd like to be treated.





Guest contributor: Aashna Bali from the Our Lives, Our Voices project shares her story with us.



Five weeks into medical school and I'm already able to see the disparity between the discussed physiology of diabetes, and what those of us actually experience living with the condition on a daily basis. After getting involved with the "Our Lives, Our Voices" project to improve social, emotional, and mental care for young Type 1 Diabetics in Northern Ireland, volunteering has made me even more resolved to continue advocating for those affected by the disease.

Growing up with Type 1

I was diagnosed in 2010, when I was nine years old. Apart from the classic symptom of drastic weight loss, what really alerted my mum that something was wrong was that I missed a whole week of school, physically unable to get out of bed. After coming out of the hospital, I resumed my normal activities as soon as possible, but as anyone with Type 1 knows - there are always unpredictable challenges in juggling blood sugars and treating the physical (and often emotional) highs and lows. Being someone heavily involved in all facets of school life growing up - whether that was sitting exams, the performing arts, student leadership, and volunteering - I never wanted to be the person who had to stop or inconvenience anyone else to look after myself.

Volunteering on Our Lives, Our Voices

As I finished my particularly stressful final year of school, I realised just how easy it had been to forget to prioritise my health. The exciting new "Our Lives, Our Voices" project was so exciting to me as this was a chance to help other Type 1's feel more empowered, and ready to cope with their condition.

Joining the team aimed at helping support Type 1's across the country actually made me realise just how much we've grown to support each other. It is an indescribable feeling to be with people who understand you straight away - we can swap exercise hacks, vent about stubborn blood sugars, and even share hypo supplies, all without having to stop and explain ourselves.

As part of the early stages of the project, we are working with two incredible mental health charities in to develop a wellbeing programme for 13-25 year olds living with Type 1. Individually, I am collating information for public venues such as airports regarding Type 1 diabetes. It seems like such a trivial exercise, but having encountered so many stressful situations in everyday life like going through airport security, I want other Type 1's to feel safer, and less ashamed of the inconvenience of their condition.

Transition to university

This September, I started my own new journey by shifting to Bristol to study medicine. Unable to find much experiential information on dealing with Type 1 at university, I was even more grateful as the youngest member of the "Our Lives, Our Voices" that all my senior Youth Leaders could give me

their tried and tested tips. I have absolutely loved immersing myself in the incredible course and city, but definitely underestimated the impact the move would have on my diabetes, which has been a steep learning curve. People often ask me whether being diabetic has made me want to be a doctor. A few years ago, I would have resolutely denied it, but I realise now that it has had a bigger impact on me than I ever realised - diabetes has given me more than just a firm grasp of the endocrine system from an early age.

I've always made it a point to not be defined by my diagnosis, but whether I wanted it to or not, diabetes has played a huge role in shaping me and my desire to make a difference to people with various health conditions. Having encountered some incredible medical professionals throughout my journey has made me acutely aware of the impact a good relationship with a healthcare team can have.

Looking to the future

Usually, when people spot my insulin pump on my hip, the tape stuck in an attempt to keep a sensor in my arm, or me casually squeezing blood out of my fingertips, they respond with an astonished "But you're so young and active!" "But you don't look diabetic!" or even, "It must be so annoying having to avoid sugar". The stereotypical image that has come to represent diabetes is long overdue an overhaul. Helping change that perception is what I love about Diabetes UK - an organisation that seeks to destigmatise the condition and encourage respect for all types of diabetes.

Having had an amazingly progressive paediatric team, I am also hugely passionate about Type 1's being able to access life changing technology such as insulin pumps and Freestyle Libre Sensors. From first-hand experience, these not only drastically improved my immediate quality of life, but also gave me the confidence to be able to look to the future and tackle living independently. Working on awareness campaigns to help ensure equality or at the very least, transparency on accessing these management options is paramount.

At the end of the day, Type 1 is a self-managed condition and for that reason, bearing the burden alone can become extremely isolating. I am so grateful to be a volunteer that gets to make connections within this incredible community.

No matter what stage of your journey you are at, I would encourage anyone interested in making a difference to the 3.7 million people in the UK that live with diabetes to proactively get in touch and stay involved in any way possible.

For more information please email
OurLivesOurVoices@diabetes.org.uk



Adopt a Project

Research is an important part of our work and our hope for the future. And that is one reason why we are so passionate about diabetes research in Northern Ireland. Everything we know about diabetes is a result of research – and Diabetes UK scientists have already contributed to life-changing breakthroughs throughout our 80 year history.

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Thanks to our incredible supporters, we've invested over £3.7 million in diabetes research in Northern Ireland alone, so there's a lot to be proud of. We have some of the world's best scientists working on very exciting projects locally, ranging from preventing eye complications, to tackling infertility in Type 2 diabetes, right through to exploring if spider venom could unlock new diabetes treatments.

But we know there's more to do. Research is expensive, and for every £1 the UK spends on caring for diabetes, it invests just half a penny on research. We need your help to fund more trials, support more scientists & discover more ground-breaking treatments.

Diabetes UK research projects can be adopted by Diabetes UK groups, community groups, companies,



clubs, organisations and individuals for a minimum donation of £1,000, known as Adopt – a – Project. At any one time, we have around 120 research projects making discoveries across the UK and currently there are five projects in Northern Ireland.

So rally your local group, your family, friends, work colleagues, or go it alone. There are loads of fundraising opportunities to help you raise enough to adopt a project. Your donation will go directly to the project you choose – from tackling a

complication of diabetes to bringing us one step closer to a cure.

All of the research we fund is only possible through the generous contributions of our supporters. We want to bring you closer to the researchers we support, so that you can see how your donation is making a difference.

Email fundraising@diabetes.org.uk for more information on how you can help.

Family Weekender 2019

October 2019 was the return for the Type 1 Family Weekender Event. 16 families attended the Crown Plaza Belfast and Belfast Activity Centre.

The weekender was a great success, bringing together families of children living with Type 1 diabetes, offering support to the parents from our guest speakers and workshops and also from each other. The children had a great time at Belfast Activity Centre getting to know each other and building friendships. Thank you everyone who was involved in the great weekend, we cannot wait for next year. To find out further details of the 2020 events please check out Facebook and website from January 2020.



The Our Lives, Our Voices

Since the last time we talked we are now 6 months into The Our Lives, Our Voices Project.

14 young leaders are taking part in the project, and have been very busy taking the lead on the project; creating their own logo, designing their own t-shirts and, more importantly, have developed a Young Leaders Working Group or committee to promote and deliver the youth-led aspect of the project.

A residential took place at the end of August, when the young leaders met with David and Hayley from AWARE NI and Action Mental Health to start creating the Wellbeing programme which they will begin delivering in April 2020. They now have 6 sessions developed, looking at topics such as better emotional health and well-being, self-care, stigma and perceptions, jobs and Uni and many more.

To help promote the Our Lives, Our Voices Project and the Wellbeing Programme we will have a press launch plus some exciting news to young people living with Type 1 Diabetes, their families and their various support networks across Northern Ireland.

Recruitment

We are asking young people aged 13-17, from across Northern Ireland, to join us at a focus group and tell us what matters most in your lives and this will also be added to the programme. If you are interested or know anyone who would like to take part, please ask them to get in touch with Carl on 02890 666646.

What's coming up:

- » Young Leaders meet once a month in various locations across Northern Ireland
- » A second youth worker will be joining with the project in January 2020
- » Type 1 events for young people
- » Residential in February for Young Leaders

If you would like more information or are interested in becoming part of the project, please email ourlivesourvoices@diabetes.org.uk



This beautiful collage was created by the children during the recent Family Weekender

Inspire Award Winners



Congratulations to all our winners of the 2018 Inspire Awards. The ceremony took place during the summer at Lisburn Civic Centre and we celebrated the amazing work of so many individuals and groups who helped the local diabetes community.

Those who collected an award on the day were:

- » **Fundraising Award** – Helen Glasgow
- » **Local Group and Community Award** – Newry and Mourne Diabetes Support Group
- » **Supporting Diabetes UK Award** – Irene Cull
- » **Supporting Others Award** – Tom Rush
- » **Young Person's Outstanding Contribution Award** – Katy-Lee Barrett
- » **Unsung Hero Award** – Donna Hanlon and Siobhan McNulty

Congratulations to everyone who was involved and for all our amazing volunteers and fundraisers who make such a wonderful difference to so many people.





Have you had your free flu jab yet?



Diabetes UK is urging everyone with diabetes to take up the offer of a free a flu jab through their local pharmacy or GP.

Flu can cause blood sugar levels to rise high – a natural response to fighting infection. But a serious infection can cause blood sugar levels to rise so high that they become dangerous for people with diabetes. This can lead to acute complications, which can often go unrecognised, and can even be fatal.

The vaccine, which every person with diabetes is entitled for free each year, is the most effective protection against flu. Without it, flu can also develop to pneumonia or bronchitis, which might require hospital admission.

It can take up to two weeks for a flu jab to work. That's why it's essential that everyone at high risk of serious illness from flu gets vaccinated as soon as possible to eliminate the risk of life-threatening complications.

For more information about diabetes and flu, please visit: www.diabetes.org.uk/seasonal-flu



Diabetes UK Research Partnership



The partnership is a collective of people who share an interest in diabetes research, either as patients, carers or working in the field. The research partnership aims to fill the gap between the research community and the diabetes community, providing a vital link between the research teams, the hospital trusts, the funders, and the people affected by diabetes.



The research partnership has been active for over 5 years, and in that time has been involved in a wide variety of research activities. Some examples of research ventures are: diabetes retinopathy studies, novel doctor training for patient safety, investigating self-administration of insulin for in-patients, and trials of thermo imaging for early detection of foot problems. The partnership involvement also varies from providing input to the design and wording of patient information leaflets, surveys and letters to having members sit on project supervisory board meetings.

Patient involvement helps to ensure that research is being carried out with or by members of the public rather than to, about or for them. It helps medical researchers see things through the eyes of a patient and focus on the real reason for their work. It also helps to make sure that work being carried out is not only the right research but also makes sure that the research is done right.

The research partnership meets to discuss research proposals 4-5 times a year and assists with literature reviews often by email when requested.

If you would like to be become involved in the partnership and research in Northern Ireland please contact Nivolunteering@diabetes.org.uk or call **028 9066 6646**



Patient Advocates for Patient Safety (PAPS) We are recruiting!



A team of doctors, nurses and pharmacists based at Queen's University, Belfast has been working on a project called 'Making Insulin Treatment Safer' (in hospitals) known as MITS.

The project recognises that foundation doctors in their first year of qualifying have to prescribe insulin without having much experience. The project sets out to support these junior doctors to reflect on the complexity and uncertainty of their prescribing experiences within a case-based discussion facilitated by trained debriefers. This part of the project will also see final year medical students being offered MITS debriefing during their early prescribing experiences during March to May 2020.

In the first year of the project two people with Type 1 diabetes became debriefers and it was so successful we would now like to recruit others either with Type 1

diabetes, or Type 2 diabetes taking insulin, or anyone involved in looking after someone taking insulin.

Training will be offered in January 2020 and takes 3 hours. We will pay travel expenses and also a one-off payment of 25 pounds once you start doing debriefs.

If you would like to know more
please contact us via email
paps.actwisely@gmail.com



Patient **A**dvocacy For **P**atient **S**afety

smac²

PAPS is a research project that aims to establish how patients can be involved in medical students and foundation doctor training to Improve Patient Safety.

Medical trainees take part in case based discussions as part of their training. By incorporating the self reflective tool of smac² patient safety is improved.

If you are an insulin user or care for an insulin user, you can help improve medical training by becoming Case Based Discussion De-briefer.

Training is provided, as are travel expenses, a £25 gift voucher will be earned after completing 5 de-briefs.

Form more information and to register interest please email: paps.actwisely@gmail.com



The Key



The Key shop in Larne recently celebrated their second anniversary of raising funds in aid of Diabetes UK Northern Ireland and The Cure Parkinson's Trust.

Over this time the team of volunteers at the shop have raised £9,175 for Diabetes UK NI and the same for The Cure Parkinson's Trust. For their dedicated volunteering and outstanding fundraising, Mary Houston on behalf of the Key, was nominated for an Inspire Award in 2019.

This is a very successful ongoing partnership with The Key in Larne and we are looking forward to continuing to work with them in 2020 and beyond, with all funds now going to Diabetes UK Northern Ireland.



Thanks to the support of High Sheriff Alderman Tommy Sandford, the Belfast City Hall turned blue for diabetes during Diabetes Week



Can the power of your voice be the new fundraising channel of the future?



With 50 Billion voice searches every month across the world, and with 1 in 10 homes in the UK owning a smart speaker such as an Alexa, Google Assistant or Siri and with a 40% increase with people owning one, year-on-year, you could see why voice maybe the fundraising channel of the future with it becoming ingrained in our daily lives.

Voice technology can be described as the next evolution of interaction with tech: from clicking on a PC, to touch on smartphones, to voice. Interestingly, it is the GenX and baby boomers which are the demographic which mostly use smart speakers due to being more comfortable with voice commands than text.

For charities, voice technology offers huge potential and opportunities to connect and deliver their services and/or to collect donations to their audience in their homes and on the go.

Some charities that have embraced a voice skill (which is what you call apps for Alexa and other

assistants) are Cancer Research UK & their alcohol tracker, and British Red Cross & their First Aid skill, Breast Cancer Care & the 'Taking care of your breasts' guide for self-examination and NSPCC, who have developed three skills including information on Keeping children Safe including the PANTS song and being Net Aware. However, NSPCC has become the first charity to accept donations using Amazon Alexa after the launch of a donation template skill for the platform in December 2018. The donation is automatically deducted from the users registered payment method on their Amazon account and sent to the charity via Amazon Pay.

A Generation to end the Harm

Diabetes UK Strategy 2020-2025

We are excited about our new strategy and hope that you will continue to help us in the years ahead.

OUR AMBITIONS →

At the heart of our strategy, what motivates us every day, and what drives us towards our vision of a world where diabetes can do no harm, are **two ambitions**.

1

We want people to live well and longer with diabetes.



2

We want to cure or prevent diabetes.



OUR OUTCOMES →

Over the next five years we have **five outcomes** which will help us fulfill our ambitions.

1

More people with type 1, type 2 and all other forms of diabetes will benefit from new treatments that cure or prevent the condition.

2

More people will be in remission from type 2 diabetes.

3

More people will get the quality of care they need to manage their diabetes well.

4

Fewer people will get type 2 and gestational diabetes.

5

More people will live better and more confident lives with diabetes, free from discrimination.

GETTING THERE QUICKER, DOING IT BETTER →

We've identified key cross-cutting areas that will be a part of everything we do, accelerating our progress, helping us have more impact and delivering power to our mission.

Fighting diabetes with you



Addressing and fighting inequality



Using technology and innovation to improve everything we do



Learning and improving together



If you would like to find out more then please email n.ireland@diabetes.org.uk to see how you can get involved.

Diabetes Network: Your Feet Your Care



To mark World Diabetes Day (14th November 2019), the Diabetes Network for Northern Ireland has launched a new Foot Care Pathway to improve services for adults living with diabetes.

There are currently around 100,000 people living with diabetes across the region who are at increased risk of developing diabetic complications including foot problems.

The new pathway offers those living with diabetes the opportunity to have their feet screened once a year. Patients will also have their foot care plan reviewed by their local podiatry team.

Why it's so important

People with diabetes are more likely to be admitted to hospital with a foot ulcer than with any other complication of diabetes. Diabetes carries an increased risk of lower extremity amputation, 23 times higher than for a person without diabetes, and 80% of amputations are preceded by foot ulceration. Between 150-200 amputations are carried out in Northern Ireland each year due to diabetes of which around 100 are major amputations.

The human cost is immense. Following the onset of foot ulceration or foot amputation, up to 70% of people have died within 5 years, a mortality rate significantly greater than colon, prostate or breast cancer.

Patient Pathway

The new Pathway consists of 4 steps (see diagram 1). It delivers a flexible model of care from screening through to advanced foot disease with a focus on the prevention of ulcers and amputations which will ultimately reduce hospital admissions.

Welcoming the new pathway, Dr Hamish Courtney, Clinical Lead, for the Diabetes Network explained, "Foot disease is a secondary complication of diabetes and can cause pain, ulcers, amputations, disability and increased mortality. When treated in a timely and effective manner however many, can be significantly reduced or avoided."

Dr Courtney continued: "Following diagnosis and an initial assessment by a podiatrist, patients will receive an individual care plan with yearly screening to check foot health. If problems are identified during the review, the patient will be



referred to the appropriate step on the Pathway and cared for by an appropriate healthcare professional depending on their need.

"Keeping a close eye on your feet is very important and you should take time to do this every day – Your Feet Your Care," he said.

The pathway has been produced by The Diabetes Network for Northern Ireland. The Network brings together people living with diabetes, carers, and health and social care professionals working in partnership with Diabetes UK to improve diabetes services.

For further information on the diabetic foot care pathway log onto
www.hscboard.hscni.net/diabetes-network

The Diabetes Footcare Pathway for Northern Ireland



- 4 **Multi-disciplinary Diabetes Foot Team (based at Royal Victoria Hospital)**
 - Emergencies and complex problems will be treated by this team
- 3 **Enhanced Foot Protection (Hospital Based)**
 - Specialist hospital support is provided at this stage
- 2 **Foot Protection Team (Community Based)**
 - This community based team provides early treatment and protection
- 1 **Foot Screening**
 - Patients will be assessed annually by a podiatrist and an individual care plan agreed

