



# COMMUNITIES AND VOLUNTEERING: OUR VISION

## Diabetes UK has ambitious goals to improve the lives of people living with and at risk of diabetes. The scale of this ambition is huge.

Over 12 million of us live with diabetes or prediabetes. That's 1 in 5 adults in the UK. Diabetes is a complex and often misunderstood condition that can affect every part of your body and every part of your life. So getting the right care and support is crucial.

**Our vision** is a world where diabetes does no harm. It's why we campaign for better care, give support in times of need and fund groundbreaking research into new treatments and a cure. Diabetes doesn't stop, so neither do we.

To achieve this, we need a strong and passionate group of volunteers and community partners. The knowledge,

skills, and experiences they bring are essential to help us reach and support as many people as possible.

**To succeed, we must be bold and clear about the challenges we face and how we can address them together. This means working in new ways, being more deliberate in who we reach out to with our knowledge and experience, showing the impact we make every day, and being open to new ideas.**

That's why, with a network of engaged and motivated volunteers and partners, we will focus on these key areas:

**1 Supporting those newly diagnosed with type 2 diabetes**, giving them the solid foundations they need to live with diabetes.

**2** Making sure everyone with diabetes gets the care and support that they need to **reduce the inequity in health care**, especially those from Black African, Black Caribbean, South Asian backgrounds, and those experiencing deprivation.

**3 Ending the stigma** associated with diabetes, which has a long-term negative impact on people's health and wellbeing.

**4** Significantly **reducing the number of people at high risk** who go on to develop type 2 diabetes.

**5 Increasing our income** so that we're able to create a world where diabetes can do no harm together.

# WHY WE NEED CHANGE



## We need to be honest about the current situation to achieve our goals.

### We know that:

- **250,000 people** are diagnosed with type 2 diabetes each year. Reaching people under the age of 60, those from South Asian, Black African, and Black Caribbean communities, and those in areas of higher deprivation will mean we're supporting groups who have previously been underserved and underrepresented.
- **Less than 37%** of people receive all nine diabetes care processes. Those missing out the most are from South Asian, Black African, and Black Caribbean communities, as well as those aged under 40 and living in areas of deprivation.
- **24% of people** with type 2 diabetes live in the most deprived areas of England and Wales, compared to 14% in the least deprived. For people under 40, including children, 35% of those living with type 2 diabetes live in the most deprived areas versus 8% in the least deprived.
- **Stigma affects 90%** of people living with diabetes, causing many to delay or avoid seeking the care and support they need. Over half have missed healthcare appointments due to fear of judgement.
- Despite the high rate of diabetes, funding for research and investment in care and support is low. As Diabetes UK relies on fundraising for everything we do, we must **significantly grow our income** to meet these challenges.

## At the same time, we also know that our Communities & Volunteering work:

### Varies by location

Our priorities and the needs of different communities change from place to place.

### Can feel disjointed

We want all volunteers to understand our goals and how their time helps achieve them. This isn't always clear, so we need everyone to focus on the same areas of change.

### Isn't equally accessible

Our volunteering system, Assemble, has improved things, but we need to ensure everyone has opportunities to join, and access to training, information, and support.

### Needs to adapt

Reaching hundreds of thousands of people with diabetes each year is ambitious. Volunteers can't do it alone, so we're introducing new ways to share information and knowledge, like through partnerships.

# WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED SO FAR



We know that there have been many positive changes in our Communities & Volunteering work, which gives us hope for how we can achieve our ambitions in the future.



## We've seen:

- ✔ **Commitment to tackling inequities** in our Communities & Volunteering work, including greater diversity within our lived experience committees and research panels, and through our work with the Tackling Inequality Commission.
- ✔ **Success with Together Type 1**, showing benefits of working together across large areas, linking young people with diabetes, healthcare professionals, NHS bodies, and other partners.
- ✔ **Rollout of our volunteering system, Assemble**, opening opportunities to get involved with the charity and allowing volunteers to tell us more about their impact, leading to new annual Activity Reports.
- ✔ **Innovation from volunteers**, supporting communities across the UK and creating new ways to share our strategy and ambitions based on local needs.
- ✔ **Increased partnership working** across the UK, helping us reach more people, continue learning from diverse communities and have a longer-term impact.
- ✔ **Testing new technology** to support our local groups to raise money in new ways.
- ✔ **Developing involvement opportunities** like Communities in Action and the Diabetes Lived Experience Advisory Committee, empowering people with diabetes to influence how we talk about diabetes, our charity's goals, and our messaging to drive change in diabetes care.

# THE PLAN: 2025 AND BEYOND



## To help us achieve these ambitions, we need to:

- 1 Listen to volunteers and community partners:** Diabetes UK has clear goals, but we will only reach them by working with our volunteers and communities. Everyone involved has something valuable to offer, and we need to use this experience to shape the future. This may include trying new ways of volunteering and working together.
- 2 Make sure everyone knows how they can help:** All volunteers and community partners should understand how they contribute to our mission of creating a world where diabetes does no harm. We want our volunteers to see how their work supports Diabetes UK's goals.
- 3 Build a strong volunteer community:** Volunteers and partners will have clear, consistent experiences. They'll stay updated on our work, have chances to share advice, and feel proud to be part of the team.
- 4 Offer simple training and resources:** We'll make sure everyone understands who we are, what we stand for, and how we support people. We want everyone to feel ready to talk about our work and be ambassadors for Diabetes UK. Volunteers and community partners will get training that helps them speak confidently about our goals. We want everyone to feel capable and safe in their roles.
- 5 Work with trusted partners:** We'll find new ways to work with communities and team up with others to reach more people and share information with those who need it. We'll be clear about what we can offer and learn from others too.
- 6 Recognise the value of partnerships:** Partnerships can bring many benefits, such as money and a wider reach. We'll offer corporate partners chances to help their local community and support fundraising efforts.
- 7 Support volunteer-led groups:** Groups led by volunteers are important for people living with diabetes and often part of local health networks. We'll make sure these groups know how their work helps to achieve our goals.
- 8 Share the impact of volunteers and partners:** We'll make it easy to hear how volunteers and partners are making a difference. Every conversation matters, and we want to share everyone's stories to show the change we're creating together.
- 9 Offer different ways for people to get involved:** We understand that volunteers have different amounts of time to give. We'll offer various roles and also make it easy for people to get involved in fundraising with clear information on how they can help.
- 10 Communicate clearly and often:** We'll keep everyone updated on what's happening and why. As we learn and grow, our focus might change. By being open and clear, we can all work together to respond to these changes.