New Year Resolutions

It’s fair to say that the New Year often means the start of new lifestyle regimes and activities for many people. Now month one in, you may be looking for further support on how to improve your health. Here are useful resources:

- **Diabetes UK** provide free 7-day meal plans for a variety of nutritional situations. E.g. Eating for one, family of 4, budget meals, calorie meal planners.

- **ACE Lifestyle’s** award-winning adult weight management services. Visit their website or phone 0800 022 4524 (Option 2)

- **Provide Lifestyle** (Essex) can support you to stop smoking, make lifestyle changes, improve your wellbeing and they provide a workplace health programme.

- **Health in Mind** provides access to a range of therapy treatments for adults with mental health problems in and around Colchester and Tendring. They offer Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Guided Self-Help (GSH), counselling, workshops and courses. Visit their website or phone 0300 330 5355

**Diabetes care in North East Essex gets the recognition it deserves!**

North East Essex CCG were invited to the CCG Prescriber Conference and won two awards in the National Diabetes Complete Awards 2019. These awards recognised NEEDS for their hard work and dedication as they received awards for meeting their ‘Three Treatment Targets in Diabetes’ and for ‘Best Monitoring in Diabetes’.

Congratulations to the NEEDS team for this amazing achievement!

We would also like to congratulate the staff at Lawford Surgery who picked up an award for ‘Effective implementation HbA1c control – GP Practice’.

**Alan Nabarro Medal**

We would like to congratulate one of our patients who received his Alan Nabarro medal whilst completing a DAFNE course!

The Alan Nabarro medal is awarded by Diabetes UK to those who have lived with diabetes for 50 years. The award highlights how living with diabetes for a long period of time is perfectly manageable given the right advice and support.

**New Post-DAFNE Refresher Day**

After auditing our post-DAFNE data and listening to patient feedback, we decided a revamp was needed. The post-DAFNE course, or ‘refresher’ course, will now run four sessions a year - two in Clacton and two in Colchester.

If you are interested in attending, please call 0345 241 3313 (Option 2) or email education@diabetesneeds.org.uk

Post-DAFNE courses are available to those who have completed DAFNE or BERTIE in the past. This session is a refresher and an update. It is a one-day session with two DAFNE educators in a group setting of approximately 20 people.

**Local diabetes charity - the1difference**

*the1difference* is a local newly formed charity for people living with Type 1 diabetes. We aim to raise awareness of the differences between Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, raise money for research and support people living with Type 1 by creating support networks.

The following events are happening soon near you!

**Sunday 26th April 2020** – walk in High Woods Country Park, meet us at 11am at the Visitors Centre
NEEDS’ New Healthcare Assistants

As mentioned in previous newsletters, one of NEEDS’ aims is to increase the number of people living with diabetes who have a complete annual review and health check. This is typically carried out at your GP surgery and may be referred to as your year of care, annual check or the 8 care processes.

National guidance is that the below should be completed at least once a year:

- **HbA1c test to measure overall blood glucose levels over the past 8 to 12 weeks**
- **Blood pressure measurement**
- **Cholesterol test to check for levels of harmful fats in the blood**
- **Eye screening (retinal screening) using a special, digital camera to look for any changes to the back of the eye (retina)**
- **Foot examination – to check the skin, circulation and nerve supply of legs and feet**
- **Kidney function (blood creatinine) – a blood test to measure how well the kidneys are working**
- **Urinary albumin – a urine test to check for protein, which may be a sign of kidney problems**
- **BMI (body mass index) measurement, to see if you are a healthy weight**
- **Smoking review, including advice and support if you are a smoker**

Health checks are so important as they can highlight early changes which may indicate diabetes complications. Having regular blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol checks helps your healthcare team pick up on important changes. This is so you can get the right advice or treatment you need.

But it makes all the difference if you’re in the know too. Be informed - know what checks you’re entitled to and keep a close eye on your test results. Write them down so you can see how things change over time. This will help you look after yourself between appointments.

National Diabetes Audit

In the National Diabetes Audit has found that people with Type 1 diabetes are less likely to have all 8 care checks completed when compared to those with Type 2, but actually even Type 2 rates were very low. Locally, we recognise the impact of missing these checks can have on your health and aim to achieve as close to 100% as possible of people living with diabetes having their care processes complete.

In a bid to improve how we do this, NEEDS have recently trialled having a Healthcare Assistant complete any overdue or missing checks before people are seen in clinic by the NEEDS clinician. So far we have seen improvement in figures and hope to continue seeing more as we recruit another HCA in the coming months.

If you have not had your annual review at your GP practice, give them a call to arrange it. If you are coming to see NEEDS for clinic or an education session and know that you are missing a care check, please speak with the clinician and let them know so we can try to do on the day. If you know it’s been over a year since your last urine sample, feel free to bring one along or we can provide a pot to do one the day!
UK Research Update

**Early Type 2 Diagnosis:** Early signs of Type 2 diabetes risk could be seen decades before a diagnosis. New research has revealed that signs of being at high risk of Type 2 diabetes can be spotted in children as young as 8 years old, often decades before a diagnosis. Changes to our genes can increase our chances of developing Type 2 diabetes, with around 500 genes linked to a higher risk.

**Hypo Unawareness:** Hypo unawareness could disrupt brain activity involved in attention and decisions. Our researchers have found that hypo unawareness may disrupt blood flow to areas of the brain involved in decision making and attention span in people with Type 1 diabetes.

A team at King’s College London, led by Dr Pratik Choudhary, think these changes may be why some people stop being able to feel low blood sugars and therefore are unable to treat them promptly.

**New DiRECT study uncovers the science behind remission**
Our DiRECT trial continues to build our understanding of how type 2 diabetes develops, and what happens when people go into remission.

**The importance of liver fat**
Professor Roy Taylor and the team have been studying people who took part in DiRECT – both those who did and did not go into remission.
More information about the above studies and information about how to get involved with research can be found [here](#).

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**Living with Type 1 Diabetes event – A huge success!**

Our first event was held in November 2019 at JobServe Community Centre in which 80 people attended. The event welcomed both those living with Type 1 and their carers/relatives and encouraged attendees to increase their knowledge about Type 1.

The day involved various interactive sessions including DAFNE taster / refresher, interpreting FreeStyle Libre data, hospital admission and sick day rules. We also had a guest speaker, Kevin House, who gave an impactful speech about the impact of mental health and your frame of mind can have on diabetes. The feedback has been very positive so we plan to make the event a regular yearly occurrence.

We have also just launched a Diabetes Wellbeing event in Clacton on Friday 28th February at The Brotherhood Hall.

The event welcomes both those living with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes and will provide the opportunity to get support, advice and your diabetes health checks completed by our team.

To attend, book your place [here](#).

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**Contact Us**

If you have any questions about the NEEDS service or any of the topics covered in this newsletter please contact us:

**Telephone:** 0345 2413313 or 01473 344930

**Email:** info@diabetesneeds.org.uk

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**Web:** www.diabetesneeds.org.uk

Do you use social media?
**Find us at:** www.facebook.com/NEEDiabetesService
**Twitter:** @diabetesNEEDS