

Diabetes Scotland making change happen

Diabetes Scotland launches a series of grassroots events calling for local action to tackle the defining health crisis of our time.

There are nearly 300,000 people living with diabetes in Scotland and over 500,000 at risk of developing Type 2, so the condition is the defining health crisis of our time.

Diabetes Scotland believes that grassroots action is vital to making change happen and has organised a new series of events showing how we can make a positive difference together.

Coinciding with the opening of a new portrait exhibition illustrating the variety of people affected by diabetes, the first *Diabetes in Scotland – Making Change Happen* event takes place at the **Lochgelly Centre in Fife** at 2.00pm on 9 February 2019.

Angela Mitchell, National Director of Diabetes Scotland said: “If you live with diabetes yourself, care for someone with the condition, or have strong links to diabetes then our *Diabetes in Scotland – Making Change Happen* events are for you. We want to hear your concerns, share our priorities for 2019 and discuss ways you can get involved in helping make change happen.

“The recent success of our Flash Glucose Monitoring campaign – which resulted in the life-changing technology rolled out on prescription across Scotland – shows what we can achieve together.

“We want to ensure everyone has access to the right technology. We want better emotional and psychological support. We want to prevent people developing Type 2 diabetes in the first place and, wherever possible, help people with Type 2 into remission. We also want to fund more research into better treatments and ultimately a cure.

“We hope that everyone who shares our vision of a world where diabetes can do no harm will come along to these events to tell us their concerns and find out how their support and positive action can make change happen.”

Diabetes – Types 1 and 2

People with **Type 1 diabetes** cannot produce insulin. About 10 per cent of people with diabetes have Type 1. No one knows exactly what causes it, but it's not to do with being overweight and it isn't currently preventable. It's the most common type of diabetes in children and young adults, starting suddenly and getting worse quickly. Type 1 diabetes is treated by daily insulin doses – taken either by injections or via an insulin pump. It is also recommended to follow a healthy diet and take regular physical activity.

People with **Type 2 diabetes** don't produce enough insulin or the insulin they produce doesn't work properly (known as insulin resistance). Around 90 per cent of people with diabetes have Type 2. They might get Type 2 diabetes because of their family history, age and ethnic background puts them at increased risk. They are also more likely to get Type 2 diabetes if they are overweight. It starts gradually, usually later in life, and it can be years before they realise they have it. Type 2 diabetes is treated with a healthy diet and increased physical activity. In addition, tablets or insulin may be required.

Facing Up to Diabetes Portrait Exhibition

9 February to 4 May 2019 at the Lochgelly Centre

We know that people with diabetes are so used to putting on a brave face that sometimes others don't realise how serious the condition can be.

To mark their 25th anniversary year, Diabetes Scotland wanted to commission a series of portraits where people with diabetes, or affected by the condition, don't have to smile as they reflect on the many challenges they face. Most people in the collection have either Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes. Others have neither but are profoundly affected by the condition their loved ones have to manage every day of their lives.

The charity's aim is to illustrate the sheer variety of people, from all ages and backgrounds, among the 300,000 in Scotland who live with the condition and convey the impact diabetes has on thousands more.

Portrait photography: Phil Wilkinson www.philwilkinson.net