

Registered Charity No 215199 Supporting people
with Diabetes & raising funds for Research

Diabetes UK Conference 2007

Date: October 13th & 14th 2007

The annual Diabetes UK volunteering conference took place over the weekend of 13th and 14th October at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Nottingham. Following our previous participation in this event this year was no different and we were ably represented by committee members Tony Miller and Pat Howard.

It began with the annual public meeting and a special event for family support groups.

The conference was officially opened by Professor Simon Howell, Chair of the Board of Trustees of Diabetes UK. He was followed by John Davis and Dr Moira Harrison, speaking on the subject of insulin pumps – 'How can we campaign effectively?'

It was interesting to hear that yet again the NHS appear to be running a postcode lottery with this important healthcare issue. Despite the strict criteria for receiving an insulin pump, it seems their cost (nearly £2,500 each) and the age of the applicant is also now being factored in to the final decision.

Simon O'Neill, Director of Care, Information and Advocacy Services spoke about the need for better information, better choices and better health. Especially the need for information technology in care planning, so allowing any test result for a particular patient to be available across all professionals involved in their care.

As with most organisations these days

a large amount of time is devoted to its website. Diabetes UK website is being updated and can be viewed at <http://www.diabetes.org.uk>

Another important issue was addressed by Jonathon Titterton from the NHS Centre for Involvement, this concerned why user involvement is important. It was just one of many interesting and enjoyable presentations on the first day. All of which allowed some interesting points of view to be exchanged with audience participation.

The Volunteer Achievement Awards were presented in the evening by Richard Lane OBE. These honour groups and individuals who have raised both money and the awareness of diabetes in their local area. The H G Wells award was presented to Ben Carlisle who set out to do just that following the death of his partner Jennifer at the age of 25. (You can find more information at www.jenniferfox.org)

A large amount of the second day was devoted to some of the ongoing research projects being undertaken following grants by Diabetes UK. In summary both the attending committee members felt this was a very interesting conference where Diabetes UK

Programme for 2007

December 8th – Christmas Party.
(SMDC)

showed their appreciation of the work carried out by volunteer groups around the UK such as ours. Informative and well presented talks on the ongoing research projects illustrated just how much our contributions to these enable their successful outcome. It was also beneficial to meet and converse with volunteers from other groups, to discover what was working for them and how they were campaigning for better awareness of diabetes throughout the country. It has given us some new insight towards initiatives we hope to introduce shortly ourselves as a group, look out for these and join in whenever you are able. The rallying cry from senior management at the conference was "We are all Diabetes UK".

Bucks Show

Just wanted to acknowledge our appreciation for everyone who helped at the Bucks Show this year. As with every year this involves a huge amount of effort and time for those who participate, it is however alongside the Aylesbury market day collection one of the two biggest possible fund raising days we have every year. Although this year it was noted that the show attendance was once again down from previous years we raised an admirable total for our efforts. Our version of the 'Deal or No Deal' game proved very crowd pulling and at times resulted in queues as people pushed to have a go.

Next year we will again be looking to introduce new ideas and innovative suggestions for raising more money. If you have any suggestions or ideas which would

benefit the day please let a committee member know.

Thank you to everyone who helped and made it a success.

Your Views/Ideas

One of the things highlighted at the Diabetes conference this year that is a major concern for our group directly was member involvement and numbers.

It is no secret that our member numbers have been falling for at least two years, this at a time when diabetes is on the rise across the country. There are a number of initiatives being tried across the country by Diabetes UK to counter this trend nationwide. One such move is member involvement, namely your suggestions and ideas for moving the group forward while maintaining or increasing its member levels.

These could be as varied as you like and involve any subject you wish to comment on. The main thing

however is your involvement, we have tried a number of different ways in the past with flyers and improving the website to attempting to involve the local GP's and surgeries directly. One of the ideas discussed was to assess how many of our members list actually wanted to be involved with the group directly and actively. Things such as attending meetings and being involved in our events or alternatively what would make you become involved.

Included with this newsletter is a letter explaining how we would like to explore this.

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