

A former Gurkha from Hampshire is backing a new Diabetes UK national campaign

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A former Gurkha from Church Crookham is backing a new Diabetes UK national campaign,

Taking Control highlights the importance of diabetes education.

Dambar Gurung (56), originally from Nepal, is the secretary of the Rushmoor Diabetes UK Group and was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes in 1997, a year after he moved to the Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Church Crookham with his 1st Gurkha Rifles unit.

In 2013, he has successfully campaigned for a Type 2 diabetes education course to help local people better manage their condition. It is now available in the North East Hampshire and Farnham Clinical Commissioning Group area and offers a Nepali translation.

Dambar said: "When I was diagnosed, I did not believe it. I became anxious and angry with myself. I questioned many times why me? Why it does not have cure? I read several books about it but I struggled to get information about how to best manage my condition.

But now we now have a diabetes learning course in North East Hampshire and Farnham CCG which helps people take the control of their condition.

"If people living with diabetes have access to diabetes structured education, people are more motivated to change their life style, gain the knowledge and skills to confidently manage their condition on a day to day basis."

Jill Steaton, Diabetes UK, South East Regional Manager at Diabetes UK, said: "Those who have just been diagnosed with diabetes or who have been living with the condition for some time, can find it difficult to get their heads around how to successfully manage the condition. But by attending a diabetes education course, they can instead feel empowered to take control and manage their condition with confidence.

"There is strong evidence that when people with diabetes are equipped with the knowledge and skills to manage their condition effectively, they can improve their quality of life. They can also reduce their risk of developing avoidable complications, such as kidney disease, stroke and amputation. These are not only personally devastating, but also expensive to treat. Diabetes costs the NHS nearly £10 billion a year, 80 per cent of which is spent on managing avoidable complications. But by giving people the knowledge and skills to manage their diabetes effectively, we can reduce their long-term risk of complications and reduce the cost burden on the NHS.

"We have launched our Taking Control campaign to highlight the importance of good quality diabetes education. We want to encourage everyone in Hampshire who is living with diabetes to go and ask their healthcare professional for information about a diabetes education course. The campaign also calls on the NHS to make sure that everyone with diabetes has access to the education and support they need to manage their diabetes well. Everyone with diabetes should have access to education from the moment of diagnosis and then throughout their lives."

There are more than 9,600 of people living with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes in the North East Hampshire and Farnham area.

For further media information please contact Sylvia Lambe on 01372 731 365 or the Diabetes UK Media Relations Team on **020 7424 1165** or email pressteam@diabetes.org.uk

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