

## Southampton Mum backs new campaign on World Diabetes Day

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This World Diabetes Day (14 November), local woman is backing a new national campaign highlighting the importance of diabetes education.

Diabetes UK's new Taking Control campaign highlights the huge difference diabetes education courses can make. These courses can help people with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes take better control of their condition, giving them the best possible chance of living long and healthy lives.

Former police officer, Angie Whitmarsh (56) from Southampton was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes 10 years ago.

Angie said: "I had been diagnosed for 18 months before I noticed a poster in the GP surgery about Type 2 diabetes education courses. I asked my practice nurse about it and she said she thought I already knew enough so I probably wouldn't find it useful.

"I insisted and got onto the course. I found I was already aware of a lot of the information but there was no substitute for being in a group of my peers listening and talking about our individual experiences. Education is not just about learning the factual information about diabetes it is about learning to come to terms with your diagnosis and learning with your peers is an a huge step towards doing this."

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 Southampton 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 12,000 of people living with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes in Southampton.

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The  
'Taking Control' campaign has been launched this week ahead of World Diabetes  
Day on Saturday 14 November. Join the conversation on Twitter by using the hashtag #TakingControl.

To  
find out more about going on an education course, speak to your GP or  
healthcare professional. To find out more about the Taking Control campaign and  
to take action to ensure everyone with diabetes has access to diabetes education, visit  
[www.diabetes.org.uk/taking-control](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/taking-control)

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