



an information guide for people
with long-term illnesses

Your health, Your way ... diabetes

This booklet is aimed at people with diabetes, a long-term condition. You will have to live with it for the rest of your life. While there is no cure, it can be managed so that it doesn't dominate and control your life and there is plenty that can be done to control the disease and improve your quality of life.

Living with a long-term condition can sometimes be difficult to manage day to day. So it's important you get the right information and the right help at the right time.

If you understand your condition and its treatment, you'll feel more confident. You'll be able to take better care of yourself and manage your condition; you'll be better equipped to make informed choices and decisions about your care.

So it's important to have good, reliable information about the local services available to you. Wrong or misleading information can do more harm than good. It can confuse and scare you, raise false hopes and even damage your health further.

This booklet is aimed to help you, the people around you, including family and friends, in these difficult times. It will guide you in the right direction - show you where you can get local help, support, services and information. It won't give you the answers to all your questions, but it will show you where and how to get those answers.

It is designed to point you in the right direction to find out more about your condition, your treatment, how to live with it and manage it, how to get involved with local support groups if you want to; who to turn to when you need help and support, and who to talk to if you want to discuss things with people who know what you are going through.

Your condition ... What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a long-term condition caused by having too much glucose (sugar) in the blood.

Normally, the amount of sugar in the blood is controlled by a hormone called insulin, which is produced by the pancreas (a gland behind the stomach). When food is digested and enters your bloodstream, the insulin helps the body turn glucose into energy.

However, in people with diabetes, the body can't do this. That's either because there's not enough insulin being produced, or because the insulin doesn't work properly.

Diabetes usually can't be cured, but the aim is to keep your blood glucose level as normal as possible by controlling it, and preventing health problems developing later in life.

Most diabetes will be treated by your GP or your practice nurse. If your diabetes is difficult to control, you may be referred to specialist diabetes services in the community for treatment, either in the community or at hospital. If your diabetes is not properly controlled, it can lead to many different health problems.

Your care team will:

- explain your condition to you in detail
- help you understand your treatment
- help you prepare your personal health plan
- answer any questions you have.
- give you the necessary skills to enable you to stay in control of your diabetes.

There are two types of diabetes - Type 1 and Type 2.

Type 1 diabetes

is when the body produces no insulin at all. You will need to take insulin for life, and the only treatment that works is injections. You must also make sure that your blood glucose levels stay within normal range by eating a healthy diet and having regular blood tests. So it's important you follow this programme:

Step 1: Diagnosis – your health team will identify whether you have type 1 or type 2 diabetes.

Step 2: Treatment. **Type 1** can only be controlled by insulin injections. Don't worry, you will be given advice and training from your health team. It's not as daunting as it seems.

Step 3: You will be given a copy of **your Personal Diabetes Record**. **The University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust** diabetes department produces a comprehensive '**Personal Diabetes Handbook**' which is full of advice, help, support, and handy tips. Copies of this are available from your GP and health team or the diabetes unit at the hospital.

It is important that you get a copy of this booklet.

Step 4: Check ups – you will have regular check ups with your specialist team at the hospital and/or from your GP/Practice nurse. You will have an annual appointment which will include a yearly retinal eye examination. Simple eye tests are NOT enough – this needs to be a special examination to make sure diabetes does not damage your vision.

Step 5: Help – You will be offered training to help you manage your condition, including joining a programme called '**DAFNE**' – 'Dose Adjustment For Normal Eating'. This is a five day course aimed at helping you manage and control your diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes

is when there's not enough insulin being produced by the body for it to function properly and turn glucose into energy, or when the body's cells do not react to insulin. You may be able to control your symptoms simply by eating a healthy diet, and monitoring and controlling your blood glucose level. But if the condition progresses, you will need medicines. There are several different types, taken as tablets, and you may need to take a combination of two or more. You may also require insulin treatment as part of your overall diabetes control.

Again, you will be given help, advice and support on helping to manage your condition, and you need to follow this programme:

- Step 1:** Diagnosis – your team will have identified you as having type 2 through a blood-test.
- Step 2:** You will be started on treatment, usually healthy diet and exercise initially. Later tablets and possibly insulin can be added.
- Step 3:** You will be given a copy of **your Personal Diabetes Record**. **The University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust** diabetes department produces a comprehensive '**Personal Diabetes Handbook**' which is full of advice, help, support, and handy tips. Copies of this are available from your GP and health team or the diabetes unit at the hospital.
- It is important that you get a copy of this booklet.**
- Step 4:** Check ups – you will have regular check ups with your specialist team at the hospital and/or from your GP/Practice nurse. You will have an annual appointment which will include a yearly retinal eye examination. Simple eye tests are NOT enough – this needs to be a special examination to make sure diabetes does not damage your vision.

Step 5: You will be offered a place on a training programme called **'DESMOND'** which stands for 'Diabetes Education and Self Management for the Ongoing and Newly Diagnosed'. This is a six hour training course on how to manage and control your diabetes.

Insulin treatment

Insulin comes in several different preparations and each work slightly differently. For example, some are long-acting (lasting up to a whole day), some are short-acting (lasting up to eight hours), and some are rapid-acting (they work quickly but do not last very long). Your treatment may include a combination of these different insulin preparations.

Insulin pump therapy is an alternative to injecting insulin for some people. The pump is a small device (about the size of a pack of playing cards) that holds insulin and attached to you by a long piece of thin tubing. It means you don't have to give yourself injections.

Emergency and useful numbers

You should keep the emergency, diabetes unit, and your doctor's numbers close to your telephone so that if anything happens to you, you or your helpers can call for help quickly and easily.

But there are three steps that are crucial:

- Let people know that you have diabetes. The more people that know, the more people that can help in an emergency.
- Leave a note in your house that you are a diabetic so people can see it; or wear a medical band that would alert people if you were taken ill.
- In emergencies, always telephone 999. For all other inquiries call your GP, NHS Direct or your diabetic specialist nurse.

Where can I find out more?

There are several websites where you can out more about diabetes.

- **The Diabetes and Endocrinology Department** at the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust has created a website at **www.leicestershirediabetes.org.uk** to make diabetes support just a click away for patients and healthcare professionals in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- **Diabetes UK**, the national diabetes charity, gives advice and help on all aspects of diabetes, the conditions, treatment and support at **www.diabetes.org.uk**, or on **0845 120 2960** (Open Monday to Friday 9-5pm or the charity's careline, on Diabetes UK Careline).

www.diabetessupport.co.uk – online community to share knowledge and experiences with other people with diabetes, family and carers.

YOUR care plan

If the doctor has just told you that you have diabetes, it can be both daunting and frightening.

But you are not on your own. As well as your health teams, there are charities, support groups, and even internet blogs and meetings where you can talk to people in the same situation as you.

Your health team is there to give you support, help and treatment. You can make choices and decisions that affect your condition and it's important that you develop your own personal care plan to help you manage it. Your health team will help you with this, but there are certain things you might want to do as well.

Your feelings: Most people feel overwhelmed when they are told that they have diabetes. People experience many different emotions, which can cause confusion and frequent mood swings. These emotions are part of the process that many people go through in dealing with their illness. You may find it helpful to talk to your GP, a counsellor or a member of your hospital medical team, who can help you.

Lifestyle: Changing your lifestyle can help manage and control your condition. Local help is available to support you:-

Giving up smoking: Both NHS Leicester city and NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland have dedicated teams to help you give up smoking through one-to-one advice, clinics, personal advice and nicotine patches and replacements. The City **STOP!** Team can be contacted on **0116 295 4141**, and the County and Rutland team on **0845 045 2828**.

Healthy Weight, Healthy Life: maintaining a healthy weight can have a major impact on your health. Being overweight can increase your risk of raised blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease while being significantly underweight can impact on your immune system.

The **Leicestershire Nutrition and Dietetic service** has a team of dietitians who work in a variety of clinical specialties and can help you make informed choices about the food you eat. You can access general healthy eating advice and condition specific advice via their website at **www.lnds.nhs.uk**. If appropriate your GP or practice nurse can refer you to a dietician working within your local area.

Keeping Active: Regular physical activity can help and also reduces the risk of other serious conditions, such as heart disease and stroke. Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland has a wide range of activities available such as gentle aerobics, cycling, salsa, walking and yoga. Every level of fitness is catered for, with help and advice readily available. Each district or borough has its own physical co-ordinator who provides advice on what's available in your area. Whether you are new exerciser; returning after a long time off; or a regular exerciser, all different abilities are catered for.

For more details, go to the Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport website, **www.lrsport.org.uk** or telephone your local co-ordinator on:

Hinckley and Bosworth **tel: 01455 255875**

North West Leicestershire **tel: 01530 454830**

Charnwood **tel: 01509 634836**

Melton **tel: 01664 502389**

Harborough **tel: 01858 821284**

Blaby **tel: 0116 272 7704**

Oadby and Wigston **tel: 0116 257 2672**

Rutland **tel: 01572 720936**

Leicester **tel: 0116 252 7350**

Fit and Active Buddies (FAB) Project – personal trainers and cut price gym sessions to help people lose weight in Braunstone, Beaumont Leys, New Parks and Belgrave. **tel: 0778 538 5911**

Walking: www.leicester.gov.uk/walking

City Sport: www.leicester.gov.uk/sports for a variety of sport and leisure activities to suit all.

Talking to others: Meeting and talking with other people who are, or have been, in a similar situation can be both reassuring and helpful. Details of local and national support and help groups can be found on the websites detailed in this directory.

These groups meet once a month, where you can meet and talk with other people with diabetes and their families, listen to regular talks by specialists and nurses, hear about new techniques and research, and take part in social and fund raising events.

At **Shepshed**, the group is run by Josie Mitchell, who can be contacted on **01509 503784**, and meets at Shepshed Community in Charnwood Road, Shepshed, every third Wednesday of the month at 7pm.

The Hinckley and Bosworth Group is run by Tony and Jenny Butlin, on **01455 822816**. The group meets at the Hinckley Health Centre, on Hill Street, Hinckley, every fourth Wednesday of the month at 7pm.

Loughborough Diabetes Group 2009. For patients and carers, meet in the Training Room at Loughborough Hospital every two months, contact Vanessa Wood **01509 551140**, Chris Thomas **01509 236121**, Alan Auty **01509 212693**, Pam Wiblin **0116 210 6582**.

Support groups are also listed on the Leicestershire ‘**Infolinx**’ website, a community information website run by the nine county and local councils, detailing more than 5,000 clubs, societies, organisations and self help groups based in the region. It can be reached at infolinx.leics.gov.uk

Getting the most from your medicines

Around half of patients with a long-term condition do not take their medicines as prescribed. However, for patients to take real control of their conditions, they need fast and convenient access to medicines, involvement in decisions about those medicines, advice about how to take them and information on any side effects which they may suffer.

Pharmacists have an increasing role as a source of advice for patients and their carers. There are more than 200 pharmacists throughout Leicester city, Leicestershire and Rutland who are available to help with advice and information.

Refer to the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk, or talk to **NHS Direct** on **0845 46 47** for details of your nearest pharmacist.

Benefits and financial help

Many people find that facing a long-term illness affects their finances and can cause money problems. Several local organisations offer information and advice about benefits, grants and loans you may be able to obtain.

Another useful source of information is the Government citizens' information website, **www.direct.gov.uk**

Benefit Enquiry Line: Confidential advice and information for people with disabilities, their carers and families about social security benefits, **tel: 0800 882200**

Leicester Money Advice: Free debt service which provides money advice and counselling for people who live in the city, **tel: 0116 242 1120**

Welfare Rights Advice Line. Telephone advice about benefits to people with a mental health problem and their carers, **tel: 0116 225 62 22**

Age Concern: Offers practical help, advice and information about services for older people. Age Concern Leicester has its own Welfare Rights Officer on **tel: 0116 222 0555**. Other officers can be contacted at:

Leicester, Leicester-Shire and Rutland - **tel: 0116 299 2233**

Lutterworth - **tel: 01455 557116**

Oadby and Wigston - **tel: 0116 288 5203**

Hinckley and Bosworth - **tel: 01455 619519**

It's worth checking that you're claiming everything that you are entitled to: **www.entitledto.co.uk** or **[www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/ BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport)**

Need help or advice?

The **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** is a free, confidential and individual service where you or your carers can be advised about the NHS, or voice your concerns about either your own or a relative's treatment. It aims to help solve any problems, concerns or questions you have when using health services in the area - a customer care service for your local NHS. PALS:

- Provides advice and support to patients, their families and carers
- Provides information on NHS services and local support groups
- Listens to your concerns, suggestions, queries or compliments
- Gives advice on how to make a complaint
- Helps sort out health concerns on your behalf
- Provides information on how you can get more involved in developing NHS services

You can contact a member of the PALS team in person, by telephone, email or letter. Patients and members of the public can meet PALS staff by arrangement.

NHS Leicester City PALS tel: 0116 295 7011 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Outside hours please leave a message and PALS will call you). **email: pals@leicestercity.nhs.uk**

NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland PALS tel: 01455 441971
or **01509 564444**. **email: pals@lcr.nhs.uk**

University Hospitals of Leicester PALS tel: 0116 258 3100.
email: pals@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust PALS tel: 0116 225 6647.
email: pals@leicspart.nhs.uk

Other organisations that could help:

LEEAP (Leicestershire Ethnic Elderly Advocacy Project) 30 Chandos Street, Leicester **tel: 0116 275 5515**

For city services and support groups: visit **www.leicester.gov.uk/socialcare** or **www.leicester.gov.uk/health**

The right equipment and social care

You might need special equipment to help you live at home, for example stair rails, jar openers, stair lifts, bath rails or even tap turners. If you are experiencing some form of disability as a result of your condition or its treatment, you may be entitled to help. If you are a hospital inpatient you may be seen by occupational therapists (OT) before you are discharged. The OT will assess you to find out if you need any special equipment or living aids to help you maintain your independence or improve your quality of life. If you are not an inpatient, you can ask your local social care services department for a care assessment to assess your needs.

The social care services offices are:

Blaby, Oadby and Wigston - **tel: 0116 278 7111**

Market Harborough - **tel: 01858 465331**

Charnwood - **tel: 01509 266641**

Melton Mowbray - **tel: 01664 564698**

Hinckley and Bosworth - **tel: 01455 636964**

North West Leicestershire - **tel: 01530 275200**

Rutland County Council - **tel: 01572 722577**

Leicester - **tel: 0116 253 1191**

British Red Cross Disabled Living Centre: The Disabled Living Centre at Aquis House, 211 Belgrave Gate, Leicester, LE1 3HT has a permanent display of daily living aids and equipment to promote independence. They offer free, impartial advice, information and assessment to people with disabilities, the elderly, carers and health professionals.

A referral is not required. Assessment is by appointment only.
Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 4.15 pm on **0845 373 0217** or
dlcinfo@redcross.org.uk

British Red Cross Independent Living Products Shop at 113 Clarendon Park Road, Leicester, LE2 3AH stocks extensive range of equipment to improve the quality of life for elderly and disabled people on **0116 244 9049**. Monday – Friday: 9.00am – 5.00pm, Saturday: 9.00am – 4.30pm.

British Red Cross also provides a dial-a-wheelchair service providing manual wheelchairs on short-term loan (up to two months). This service is available from 244 London Road, Leicester, LE2 1RN **tel: 0116 270 0210**. Monday: 10.00am – 4.00pm

The Disabled Living Foundation – www.dlf.org.uk is a national charity that provides free, impartial advice about all types of daily living equipment for disabled adults and children, older people, their carers and families on **0845 130 9177**.

Carers

A carer is someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a relative, friend or neighbour who, because of frailty, illness or disability is unable to manage without help.

CLASP, the carers centre, provides a wide range of support services for carers in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. CLASP is located on the Fourth Floor, Matrix House, Unit 19, Constitution Hill, Leicester LE1 1PL, **www.claspthecarerscentre.org.uk** or **tel: 0116 251 0999**.
email: enquiries@claspthecarerscentre.org.uk

Leicestershire has its own **carers project** which aims to provide carers with a local contact who can supply information, advice and support. The project also runs quarterly forums every year bringing carers together to enjoy each other's company and meet organisations and individuals providing support.

Carers development workers are located around the county and each team offers a variety of practical help, support, information and advice. Contact your local office for further details of the services and help available.

Voluntary Action Blaby District: Sandra Stocks **tel: 0116 272 7669**
email: carers@vabd.org.uk

Voluntary Action Charnwood: Nita Patel **tel: 01509 631783**
email: nita.patel@voluntaryactioncharnwood.org.uk

Voluntary Action Melton: Helen Brocklehurst **tel: 01664 485304**
email: Helenb@voluntaryactionmelton.org.uk

Voluntary Action Rutland: Gill Huddleston **tel: 01572 720052**
email: gill@claspthecarerscentre.org.uk

North West Leicestershire CVS: Sarah Houlton-Ellingworth
tel: 01530 510515 email: sarahhe@nwlcvs.org.uk

Oadby and Wigston Community Action: Sarah Lambrianou
tel: 0116 281 0026 ext.28 email: ksmith@vaow.org.uk

Voluntary Action South Leicestershire runs a carers telephone befriending Service, where carers enjoy a weekly call from a volunteer befriender giving them time to talk to someone confidentially outside the family. If you care for someone and would like more information to help you in your caring role, contact either Jacqui Mowson on **01858 439263** or Diane Claridge on 01858 439262. The carers project is based at Voluntary Action South Leicestershire, The Settling Rooms, St, Mary' Place, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 7DR. **email:jmowson@vasl.org.uk**

Advice

Citizens Advice Bureau: www.citizensadvice.org.uk gives advice on debt, benefits, housing, employment and other legal rights.

Leicester - **tel: 0116 285 2801**

North West Leicestershire - **tel: 01530 454751**

South Leicestershire (Blaby, Lutterworth, Market Harborough) and outreach venues - **0844 848 9009** Debtline - **tel: 0844 248 0040**

Melton - **tel: 01664 484050**

Charnwood (Loughborough) - **tel: 01509 267376**

Hinckley - **tel: 0844 826 9710**

Shepshed - **tel: 01509 506663**

Rutland - **tel: 0845 120 3705**

Mosaic, Shaping Disability Service (Leicester) - tel: 0116 251 5565 Helpline: 0116 262 6900 textdirect: 18001 0116 251 5565.

Voluntary Action Leicester Shire provides information and support for voluntary and community groups and volunteers in Leicester city and various venues across Leicestershire. See their website, **www.valonline.org.uk** for more information or email **helpline@valonline.org.uk** or telephone the helpline on **0116 257 5050**.

Voluntary Action Blaby District - **tel: 0116 272 7669**

Voluntary Action Oadby and Wigston - **tel: 0116 281 0026**

Voluntary Action South Leicestershire - **tel: 01858 432014**

NW Leicestershire CVS - **tel: 01530 510515**

Voluntary Action Charnwood - **tel: 01509 631750**

Voluntary Action Melton - **tel: 01664 483043**

Voluntary Action Hinckley and Bosworth - **tel: 01455 633002**

Shopping

Shopping can be difficult if you find it hard to get around because of your condition. But there are local shopmobility schemes that provide or loan disability equipment to help, such as mobility scooters.

Leicester Shopmobility operates from two locations in the heart of the city:

Highcross Shopping Centre - **tel: 0116 253 2596**;

Haymarket Shopping Centre - **tel: 0116 253 7125**

Further information can be found at

www.leicester.gov.uk/shopmobility or for details and contacts of other Shopmobility schemes, visit **www.shopmobility.org**

Melton Mowbray - **tel: 01664 480677**

Market Harborough - **tel: 01858 410864**

Hinckley - **tel: 07982 302 780**

Fosse Park - **tel: 0116 263 0600**

Coalville - **tel: 07982 706 285**

Loughborough - **tel: 01536 412 886**

Your choice...

You have the right to be treated where and when you choose.

For instance, if you needed hospital treatment, in the majority of cases you can pick the hospital of your choice for your treatment, which is right for you and your family.

Your doctor or health team would discuss the choice with you, so that you have the right information to make the decision that is right for you.

You might want to choose a hospital closer to family or friends, or a big teaching hospital. If you needed treatment, such as an operation, you might want to delay it to avoid a special occasion. But the choice is yours!

You can find out more at:

- Your GP practice
- Libraries
- **www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk**
- **NHS Direct Interactive** on digital satellite TV
- **NHS Direct** on **0845 4647**
- **www.nhs.uk**
- **www.healthspace.nhs.uk**
- **www.chooseandbook.nhs.uk**
- **www.healthcarecommission.org.uk**
- **www.patientopinion.org.uk**

NHS Choices

A wide range of information and advice about your condition and choices about your care and treatment is available on the NHS website, '**NHS Choices**', or from the NHS telephone helpline, '**NHS Direct**'.

'**NHS Choices**' on **www.nhs.uk** is a wide ranging comprehensive guide and directory that gives:

- Medical advice about most conditions
- Services from GPs to gyms, doctors to dentists, midwives to memory problems
- 'All you need to know' guides covering 750 conditions and treatments
- Carers help and advice
- Blogs to talk to the experts and other patients
- Feedback from other patients
- Up to date medical news and views on treatment and research
- Tips and help on keeping you healthy
- Benefits advice
- Links to other medical, charity and support websites
- Comparisons between hospitals to help YOU chose where YOU want to be treated

For those without internet facilities, the same information and more is available from 'NHS Direct' – the 24 hours a day every day of the year helpline.

Trained staff are available round the clock to give advice and information on all aspects of health - from instant help with immediate symptoms or problems and where to get treatment; to details of walk in centres, clinics, local organisations, support and help on **0845 46 47**.

This publication has been jointly produced by the four NHS organisations in Leicester, Leicestershire County and Rutland. Printed copies are available by contacting any of the organisations:

- **NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland**

Lakeside House, 4 Smith Way, Grove Park, Enderby,
Leicestershire, LE19 1SS

tel: 0116 295 7689

or **email: communications@lcr.nhs.uk**

- **NHS Leicester City**

St John's House, 30 East Street, Leicester, LE1 6NB

tel: 0116 295 1100/1400

or **email: enquiries@leicestercity.nhs.uk**

- **Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust**

George Hine House, Gipsy Lane, Leicester, LE5 0TD

tel: 0116 225 6485

or **email: feedback@leicspt.nhs.uk**

- **University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust**

University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust Headquarters,
Gwendolen House, Gwendolen Road, Leicester LE5 4QF

tel: 0116 258 8963

or **email: communications@uhl-tr.nhs.uk**

For further information or comments, or if you would like to contribute to the production of this document or further publications, please contact any of the above trusts.

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The NHS trusts listed above cannot be held responsible for any information provided by non-NHS organisations detailed in this document