

Diabetes Community Group – Thanet

Meeting held on Thursday 5th December, 2019 at 4.00pm at Unit 26, Centre Management Office,
Westwood Cross Shopping Centre

Present:

John Hall	
Clifford East	
Brian Urwin	
Maxine Ansell	
Jeremy Martin	
Steve Burgess	

Discussion	Action/lead
Apologies were received from Colin Smith, Sally Hart and Nigel Collingwood	
1. Brian opened the meeting noting that our group has some strengths and weaknesses. It has a fair number of members who get benefits from our discussions and visiting speakers, but the management structure needs to be beefed up. We agreed that too much of the running of the group had been left in Colin's hands and he was due to be away for several months in 2020.	
2. Diabetes UK or going it alone. We discussed the merits of joining Diabetes UK or proceeding with creating a constitution and formalising the group. Joining Diabetes UK would have the advantage of getting publicity, funds and a more established base to deal with local and national agencies. Jeremy suggested that Diabetes UK was geared up to assist people to control their diabetes rather than free themselves of it completely through diet and lifestyle changes. It would also run the risk of changing the ethos of the group and submitting to outside control. Brian and John agreed to draft a sample constitution to be presented at the next meeting.	Brian & John to produce a draft constitution.
3. Personal Stories. The group shared various problems and solutions in their handling of their diabetes. It became clear that everyone had different diabetes histories and one size fits all was not an option. The treatment each of us got at their GPs showed there was very little consistency. John got a good diet sheet emphasising sensible low carb eating and was supported in choosing to use weight loss as a strategy for putting diabetes into remission. Others had just been given pills and told to get on with it. Cliff found that in his case there was too much emphasis on avoiding hypos and not enough on reducing his blood sugar. Adopting a buddy system was generally approved of though no volunteers came forward.	
4. Eating out and recommended food. Brian is creating a list of restaurants who are prepared to offer diabetic friendly meals. He also suggested that talking directly to chefs is a good strategy. He also wanted advice on what sweeteners to use in place of sugar. Nobody had specific information though Cliff thought Sweetex at one time was not	Brian

<p>recommended to be used by airline pilots since it was thought to cause hallucinations. Some of us recommended learning to live without sweeteners altogether. Maxine said she had gone through a period when she couldn't take sugar in drinks and afterwards never needed it at all.</p> <p>Jeremy handed out various leaflets with suggestions for healthy eating for diabetics, some of which seemed to the group to read like a list of foods they had been told to avoid!</p>	
<p>5. Blood sugar readers.</p> <p>Cliff showed the group a small blood sugar reader which attaches to a smartphone. His version was for an iPhone but versions for Android phones were also available. John found a supplier - http://DiabeticSupply.co.uk who sell a kit for £13.99. GlucoRx HCT Connect Blood Glucose & Ketone Meter Blood Glucose Monitoring System for Smartphone.</p>	
<p>6. Date and time and place of next meeting.</p> <p>January 2nd @ 4pm. Unit 26, Centre Management Office, Westwood Cross Shopping Centre</p>	