

Councillors' Briefing Note
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Department: Public Health

Further Enquiries to: John Goodall

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Direct Line: 01225 716825

Type 2 Diabetes – reducing the risk in Wiltshire

The prevalence of diabetes both nationally and in Wiltshire is rising. Spending on diabetes care currently accounts for around 10% of the national NHS budget. There are currently nearly 20,000 diabetics diagnosed in Wiltshire and an estimated further 7,000 people remain undiagnosed.

Whilst type 1 diabetes often develops in people under 40 and is not preventable, 90% of diabetes is type 2 and in many cases may be prevented by maintaining a healthy weight and an active lifestyle. The negative impact of diabetes on the lives of people in Wiltshire, and the future cost to local public services could potentially be reduced by early detection and treatment of, or prevention of type 2 diabetes. Work is therefore underway, led by Public Health, to raise awareness of risk factors amongst the general public and encourage those at high risk to get tested.

Diabetes can result in blindness, amputation, kidney failure and heart disease. Early diagnosis, treatment and good control of diabetes is essential to reduce the chances of developing complications and to improve people's chances of living a long and healthy life. On behalf of Wiltshire Council, and with the support of NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Diabetes UK will be touring Wiltshire during October to raise awareness of the condition and to offer residents a free type 2 diabetes risk assessment.

Those with type 2 diabetes, may complain of needing to pass urine all the time, excessive thirst, fatigue and repeated infections. However many people do not experience any symptoms and so recognising those people at risk is vital. Overweight patients are at an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. A simple blood test through the GP will diagnose diabetes and Wiltshire Council is working with our health service partners to raise its profile. Our work to combat the rise in the number of cases of type 2 diabetes also involves promoting and enabling healthy lifestyles.

All those visiting the Diabetes UK Roadshow will have the opportunity to talk to an expert and have their risk level assessed. Those who are given a 'moderate' or 'high' risk assessment will be signposted to their local GP for further support and a blood test, if appropriate. Expert advice and information will be available on diet, physical activity, and the different types of diabetes.

The Diabetes UK bus will be at the following locations:

Tuesday 15 October - Fore Street, Trowbridge 9am – 5pm

Wednesday 16 October – George Lane car park, Marlborough 9am – 4.30pm

Thursday 17 October – Guildhall Square, Salisbury 9am – 4.30pm

Friday 18 October - The Buttercross, Market Place, Chippenham 9am – 4.30pm

Maggie Rae, Corporate Director