

Testing Times

A family holiday that is just the tops!



Diabetes UK Family Support Weekends

**By Tim Ditchburn,
Organiser**

Each year the Care Support Team in Diabetes UK run a number of Family Support Weekends around the country. They are open to all members of the family where there is a newly diagnosed youngster under 16 years old. They are run by great teams of staff, all of whom give up their time voluntarily, ranging from Diabetes Specialist Nurses to Specialist Doctors, dietitians and lay staff. All have an interest in diabetes and some even have diabetes themselves, perhaps from childhood.

So what are they for? Well basically where else do you get a chance to meet the professionals and ask them that silly little question that has been bothering you about your child's diabetes? Where else can you find other Mums and Dads in the same boat who don't laugh when you say how worried you are when your child goes off to school without you there reminding them eat, have their injection, etc? Where else do other people really listen to you when you just want to talk about diabetes? All this and more goes on in a Family Support Weekend; including the children having a great time on their own packed programme.

At the end of each event there is such a huge buzz about diabetes, it's brilliant; it doesn't take the diabetes away but it helps everyone realize that they are not alone and that in fact they are doing really well.



We've been!

**By Tracy Lee,
Committee Member**

Have you been on a Diabetes UK Family Support Weekend? If not, why not?! My friend and I recently took our two children (both aged 4 and Type 1) to one in Swindon and it was just fantastic.

We didn't know what to expect, even though we'd received a detailed programme in advance. We wondered if it might be depressing talking about diabetes all weekend, but we couldn't have been more wrong. In fact we enjoyed it so much and found it so supportive and encouraging that we didn't want to come home!

We spent much of the weekend split into small discussion groups (partners were in different groups so that they could talk more freely), and we discussed everything from the practical/medical aspects, to the reality of living with diabetes in the family, every single day. Nurses were available to advise on injections and blood testing, and sharing stories with other parents of issues at school, sibling rivalry, and how we can ever get a night off was all good.

The kids were looked after by loads of great staff, who kept them busy with bowling, a trip to an indoor play barn, art and craft activities, a visit from a children's entertainer, and indoor 'rock climbing' for the older ones. An organised crèche was available on site for the little ones. The children had a ball; in fact my little boy asked if we could live at the hotel!

It was a busy weekend, but we had time to enjoy the hotel's pool (and the bar!), and the children slept like logs. We came away feeling that we were actually doing ok, and that there are more of us out there dealing with this than we'd realised.

We will be going again, and next time our other halves are coming too!

COMMITTEE



Chair

Sally Renny 01384 377257
salrenny@blueyonder.co.uk

- Daughter diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes 24 years ago.



Secretary/Treasurer

Peter Hodnett 01384 378198
hodnett@btinternet.com

- Father-in-law diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes.



Admin Secretary/Editor

Hazel Cogzell 01384 872927
hazcog@talktalk.net

- Diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes in 1999



Membership Secretary

Tony Mason 01384 292336
anne.tony.mason@blueyonder.co.uk

- Insulin Dependent Type 2



Safeguarding Officer

Keith Parkes 01384 839836
keith.parkes@hotmail.co.uk

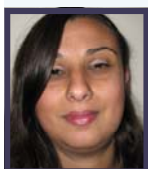
- Daughter, aged 14, diagnosed with Type 1 at the age of nine.



Committee Member

Tracy Lee 07950 855 503
tracylee@blueyonder.co.uk

- Son Will (4yrs) is Type 1, diagnosed in May 2006



Committee Member

Faize Anson 01384 280078
faize@tiscali.co.uk

- Son (11yrs) diagnosed with Type 1 in January 2003



Committee Member

Nicki Spilman 01384 392826
n.spilman@btinternet.com

- Mum of Alice, aged 13, diabetic since she was 2

WEBSITE

<http://www.diabetes-stourbridgeanddudley.com>

Group news

Thanks to Maureen, Jennifer and Pat

It is with regret that we announce the resignation of Treasurer, Maureen Southall, Child/Parent and Publicity Committee Member, Jennifer Walsh and Committee Member, Pat Moreton who all resigned at the AGM in October.

Maureen has been with the Group since its inception over twenty years ago, initially being a founder member with Linda Whorton of the Child/Parent Support Group.

The committee recognize that Maureen has given total dedication and commitment over the years in her service to the Group and the members, and she will be sorely missed by both. We wish her good health, luck, and happiness for the future.

Peter Hodnett has magnanimously agreed to take on the responsibility of Treasurer, whilst still retaining the Secretary's position.

Jennifer has been a committee member for 12 years. She has executed a very active and purposeful role, especially with the Child/Parent Group, where she has pledged to continue to give her support and help in the future .

Pat has been a big help to the group and, although she has moved a far distance away since joining the committee, she has promised to attend as many of our meetings as possible, and also help out when she can.

.....

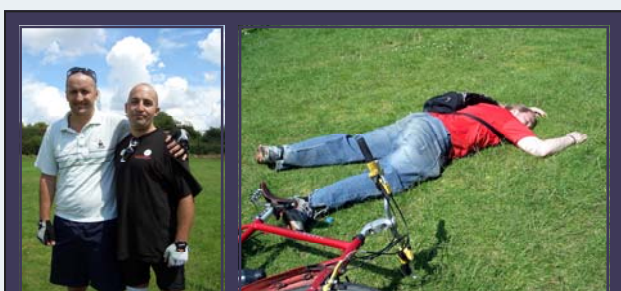
A Welcome to Tracy, Faize and Nicki

The Group would like to welcome Tracy Lee, Faize Anson and Nicki Spilman who officially joined the committee at the AGM in October 2007. They each have a child with diabetes and are very keen to raise the profile of the Child/Parent Group.

Our 12th Fun Bike Ride Raised £4,424.26 Profit

Once again our annual Bike Ride in July proved to be highly popular with the riders who gave excellent feedback about the organisation of the event.

The net profit for the Ride even superseded the previous year and the Group wish to thank everyone who took part and additionally for the brilliant sponsorship backing. A special thanks go to Steve Clare and Simon Epstein and their sponsors from Scotsman Beverage Systems who raised a whopping £675.75.



Pictured left: Steve Clare and Simon Epstein.
Pictured right: Cris Rowlands—it's all been too much!

We hope to see all you brilliant cyclists again at our 13th Fun Bike Ride in July 2008.

Charity Football Match

Phoenix Parents played a Charity Football Match against the Aston Villa Old Stars on 19 August 07, and in spite of the atrocious weather, they ultimately raised the impressive amount of £2,001.00 for our Group. A couple of familiar players for the Aston Villa Old Stars who turned out were Gordon Cowans and Tony Morley.

Our thanks are extended to Philip and Diane Hunt, who have a son with Type 1 Diabetes and who initially put our Safeguarding Officer, Keith Parkes



Chris (Pictured Left) with Keith

in touch with the Manger of Phoenix Parents, Chris Rosewarne. Additionally thanks to Chris and his team for their tremendous hard work.

We are Just Going Crackers from now on!

Unless specified, our 2008 Programme of events will not include a finger buffet, which has been the procedure in the past.

The decision arose because the volunteers who prepare the food on a regular basis have to work very hard and it is sometimes difficult to fill the slots when they are away.

However, our hospitality will include snacks, biscuits or crisps instead to have with a glass of wine or juice.

The New Diabetes and Endocrine Centre at Russells Hall Hospital

After the long wait, we can now all take heart that the opening of the Diabetes and Endocrine Centre at Russells Hall Hospital has finally materialised.

It was officially launched by the Dudley born comedian Lenny Henry. He said that he thought the facilities were fantastic and well deserved, as his mother had been treated so well by the friendly staff at Russells Hall when admitted in the past for diabetes and cardiac problems.



Pictured left: Lenny Henry.
Pictured right: Julie Pain, Matron and Andrew Ball, Lead Endocrine Nurse

Note: Don't get lost when you next visit the Centre, as it is not very clearly signposted. The directions to be followed within the hospital are: From the Main Entrance to the end of the corridor, turn left and still on the ground floor turn right into North Wing—then right again into the Diabetes and Endocrine Centre.

Write to the Editor



Letters - views - thoughts



A Message from our Area Manager

Firstly, can I take this opportunity to thank the Voluntary Group and volunteers for all their magnificent work. In particular, in tirelessly raising diabetes awareness and their continuing support and good work in campaigning for better diabetes care in Stourbridge and Dudley.

As well as focusing on the delivery of quality healthcare in adult services, particular emphasis has been put on children and transitional services. This was reflected in the Paediatric Conference at Himley Hall on 20 September. Another great example of the local Voluntary Group working with both healthcare professionals and the Primary Care Trust.

Across the Region the PCT restructuring is now complete. The 17 PCT's in the West Midlands and the respective PCT Chief Executives and Directors of Public Health have also been appointed. It is an opportune time and critical that we now pressure PCT's into improving services. As part of this process approximately 6 Public Meetings have now taken place this year, with a further 6 planned for the remainder of the year. These events highlight deficiencies in service delivery, and demonstrate collaborative working between Diabetes UK, PCT's, Voluntary Groups and people with diabetes.

On a positive note, the figures for retinal screening have just been released indicating that on average 88% of people with diabetes are being offered screening. Hopefully we can all continue to campaign to ensure this figure will rise to 100% by the end of 2007.

The West Midlands Office continues to provide essential patient information and education to all communities. Over 50,000 patient information packs have been disseminated across the region; Over 10,000 Asian DVD's and over 5000 African Caribbean DVD's, and we have just introduced a Black and Asian Minority Ethnic Pack which is being piloted in Telford.

There is much planned to improve service delivery and awareness, which can only be achieved through successful teamwork, education and effective communication by all of us.

On a final note, special thanks to the Voluntary Group Committee, and everyone else who has contributed towards making Stourbridge & Dudley one of the best Voluntary Groups in the UK.

Peter Shorrick

West Midlands Regional Manager

“What Works for Me?”

The September meeting was an open discussion of what members found useful to help them lead a healthy life as a diabetic. Sue Bacon (Diabetic Specialist Nurse) led the discussion, and it was interesting that most of the problem areas were related to the food we eat, the impact on our blood sugar and how to gain more information.

Whilst there is a fund of information available from Health Professionals, Diabetes UK, leaflets and food packaging, what worked for me was changing my Insulin regime to the Basal-Bolus System of injecting slow release insulin at night with fast acting insulin each time I eat. The vital

part of this change was attending a Carbohydrate Counting Course which taught how to assess food values, and so adjust the amount of Insulin needed to cope with each meal, which varies on an individual basis and is linked to lifestyle, activity etc., this gives a less rigid regime and allows more control of my own life.

This system works for me, but everyone would benefit from increasing their knowledge of food, its contents and the effect it has on blood sugar control.

Tony Mason

Membership Secretary

The Cycle Ride from End to End — by Ken Monkton



Ken's Letter

End to End (John O Groats to Lands End). May 2007.

I decided to do the E2E in September 2006 to celebrate that unenviable milestone of reaching 50 years of age. So from January until May every Sunday my very good friend Richard Painter and I went out riding to get ourselves accustomed to the mileage. Although I have been a cyclist for more years than I care to remember, this would be the greatest challenge so far.

Due to Richard's previous experience he organised the route, the accommodation and the logistics of getting to the start line and the return from the finish. The journey took 14 riding days with one day off when we reached home in Stourbridge. Unfortunately the weather was not our friend. During the 2 weeks we endured 30 mile an hour head winds, exceptional amounts of rain for the time of the year and finally fog on the last day. The mileage from E2E was 965 miles and with the miles taken to ride from Inverness airport to the start from Wick railway station we totalled 5 miles short of a 1000 miles!

This ride was never intended to be sponsored. All I ever wanted to do was to prove that I could ride from one end of the country to other (I knew my friend could do it as he had previously achieved this with his wife on a tandem which was no mean feat as she is not a cyclist!)

During the week before the attempt I mentioned it at work that I had decided to carry out the ride. I was asked if I was being sponsored and what charity was I doing it for. I replied that it was purely for myself and I had not thought of sponsorship as I had enough to think about, but if they wanted to they could arrange a collection on my behalf. The next question was what charity shall we donate the collection to? So, as I have been a type 1 diabetic since the age of 21, they

decided to donate the collection to the Diabetes UK — hence the reason why you were contacted. I was amazed when I was text during the ride by Sarah from work, to say how much they had been promised from all my colleagues at Vee Bee Filtration UK.

I would just like to thank Richard for all the encouragement and ensuring that I was eating regularly during the ride, my family for support and all the people at work who sponsored me from the depths of their pockets. From a diabetic point of view I have never looked on the condition as an illness, just a condition that I have to live with. It has never stopped me from doing anything that I have wanted to do and I hope that this has given others in a similar situation a reason to just get in there and do it!

Regards,

Ken Monkton.



They made it! Ken with Richard

Editor's note: *The total donation forwarded to the Group from Ken and Richard's sponsorship was £350.00. Well done to them for their excellent achievement and also a thank you for choosing us as their charity.*

Paediatric Diabetes Report

Hello again,

What a year it has been again! The primary care diabetes team has certainly been busy. Following the success of last years picnic in the park in the sunshine, we planned another one, with all our fingers and toes crossed for the good weather again. It was to no avail, the forecast on the Friday for the whole weekend was rain, rain and more rain!! We had over twenty families due to come to the picnic and were eager not to have to cancel, just because of the weather. Hazel magically managed to secure the use of the Samson and Lion pub in Brierley Hill, where we also were able to play skittles. In the end a good time was had by all.



In July we organised an event at the Molineux for all those children who were about to leave primary school and start secondary school in September. The event was organised with the aim that children would be able to start secondary school with an increased amount of confidence relating to not only their diabetes, but also starting a new school. The evening was a fantastic success, due to the support and help of the school health advisors, the psychologist and dietician as well as two teenagers who volunteered their service and experiences. Many of the young boys were Wolves supporters which was an added bonus!

September saw a first time event occur in Dudley, a paediatric diabetes conference 'Doing the right thing' was held at Himley Hall. The conference was aimed at all professionals dealing with children and young people with diabetes. Around one hundred professionals from Dudley attended the event. Diabetes UK enabled us to ensure the services of some fantastic paediatric diabetes speakers from around the UK some of which are internationally renowned! There were also speakers from our very own paediatric diabetes team. All the evaluations from the event were very positive. We have a lot to live up to for next year!!

Louise

Louise Collins
Paediatric Diabetes Specialist Nurse
Primary Care Specialist Diabetes Team

The Samson and Lion was a big hit



...and you think you've had a few problems!

By Nina Hodnett

My name is Yasmine, I am nearly thirteen years old. I haven't been feeling very well lately, I have been sick a lot and have been drinking lots of water.

My family decided that they didn't want me anymore, so they put me outside and closed the door. I was taken to stay with other people for a while which was alright but I didn't get much attention and was left on my own for most of the time. They were kind people, lots of different faces, but I don't think they understood how I was feeling. I did go and stay with another family for a little while but they took me back as I was too much trouble.

My new mom and dad – Nina and Richard, love me very much. Within hours of arriving at their home – my new home – my mom and my nanny Sandra thankfully noticed that I wasn't very well. They took me for a little ride in the car, (which I like very much) to see a nice lady called Mrs Adams. I had to stay for a few days with Mrs Adams and her friends who looked after me, although they did keep sticking pins in me which wasn't very nice. Mrs Adams told me that I was something called 'Diabetic'. I was very confused. I've only ever been called Yasmine and now they were calling me diabetic!

Before I was allowed to go home my mom and dad had to come and learn how to give me my injections. My mom found this very hard. She is very frightened of needles and she used to shake a lot which made me afraid. One day she came to see me with my dad. She was so worried about hurting me that it made her cry. Another nice lady who looked after me, Mrs Joseph, gave the needle to dad who quickly gave me my injection and made me feel better. Mrs Joseph hugged my mom and made her feel better. Mom persevered and now does it with no problems at all. I don't think she really likes it because she worries about hurting me. She always gives me lots of hugs and kisses afterwards which is OK but I prefer it when she gives me food. I have

my injections twice a day now. It's not very nice but I don't mind because I know it's important. I still get to go and see Mrs Adams and all my other new friends occasionally, but I don't have to go as much anymore. It's good I suppose, but I do miss having a look in their cupboards!

I am happy at last. I feel much better and am very settled. I've even started to stay with my nanny and granddad sometimes which is great. I like it there because they have a lovely big fridge. When nanny gives me my injection I'm allowed to go and look in it although I do need to put my feet on the kitchen drawer to have a proper inspection! They know lots about diabetes and have even told me that my great-granddad Arthur was also diabetic! We must be very special people! I am very spoilt and get away with far too much. I know I'll live here forever, I'll never have to be lonely, hungry or cold again. I have plenty of food, lots of nice fresh water, lovely fluffy pillows to sleep on and a family who will never let me come to any harm.

Although I do think my mom has gone a bit funny. She now

keeps calling me 'mommies little angel'. I try my best – I eat up all of my dinners, have a little play, but I am a bit naughty sometimes.

Oh, and by the way, they also tell me I'm a cat – whatever that means.

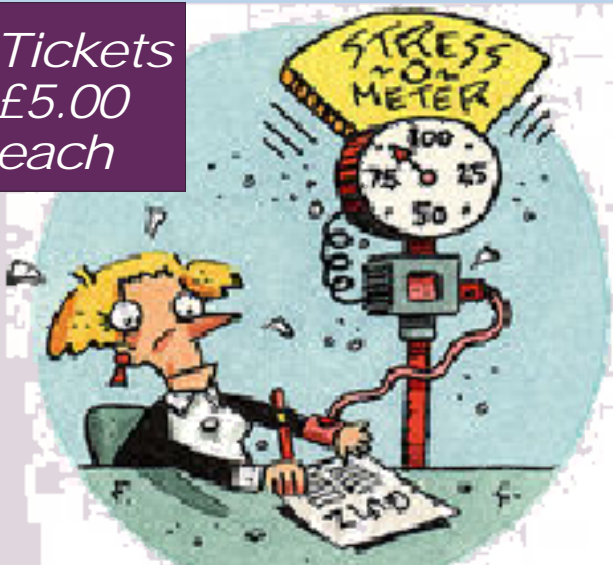


This is me, Yasmine—taking a stroll

Editor's note: *Fiona MacRae reported in the Daily Mail on August 7, 2007 that the number of cases of feline diabetes has risen five-fold in 30 years. She stated that Danielle Gunn-Moore, a professor of feline medicine, said: 'The lifestyle of cats is changing. They are tending to eat too much, gain weight and take less exercise, perhaps because they live in a flat or because their owners feel it is too dangerous to let them out—so they have little to do all day but eat, sleep and gain weight.' The Report added that a quarter of dogs are also clinically obese.*

Come to our Fun Quiz Night

Tickets
£5.00
each



**Inclusive of snacks and prizes
for the winning team**

Book your place now— the venue was fully booked at last year's Quiz. Return the completed form below with your cheque to the Editor, Hazel Cogzell, 38 Cedar Gardens, Kinver, Stourbridge, DY7 6BW

FUN QUIZ

7:30pm on Tuesday 22 January 2008
St James Church Hall, Belfry Drive,
Wollaston, Stourbridge

Please send me.....Tickets at £5.00 each
(Cheques payable to: Diabetes UK, Stourbridge,
Dudley & District Voluntary Group)

Name:

Address:.....

.....

.....Tel. No:.....

Don't miss out on the wonderful visit to The Wombourne Wodehouse

Send your cheque to Hazel Cogzell to visit The Wombourne Wodehouse (own transport) by 23rd May. Have a stroll round the garden, a guided tour of the house, and tea and cakes. Tickets cost £8.00 each.

*An Evening Visit (Own Transport)
The Wombourne Wodehouse
Wolverhampton*

*Stroll round garden at 6:00pm
Guided tour of house at 7:00pm*

Please send me.....Tickets at £8.00 each
(Cheques payable to: Diabetes UK, Stourbridge,
Dudley & District Voluntary Group)

Name:

Address:

.....

.....Tel. No:.....

Forthcoming Events 2008

Tuesday 22 January	Fun Quiz Night
Thursday 21 February	New Services at the Diabetes Centre—Dr Fiad & Team
Tuesday 11 March	Insulin Pump Therapy Dr Moira Harrison
Thursday 10 April	Rennys go to Africa
Saturday 3 May	'Measure-up' Campaign Sue Bacon and Team
Tuesday 10 June	Wombourne Wodehouse
Sunday 15 June	Wyre Forest 'Walk in the Park'