



GUILDFORD AND SOUTH WEST  
SURREY VOLUNTARY GROUP  
NEWSLETTER

May  
2009

Website:  
[www.diabetessurrey.org](http://www.diabetessurrey.org)

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## THE ROLE OF THE PRACTICE NURSE

The role of the practice nurse has changed radically over the years. I'm old enough to remember the first GP contract in 1990! Innovation then took the huge step of considering calling people with diabetes into the GP surgery for a check-up and rewarding GPs for setting up mini clinics. Prior to that most people with diabetes attended hospital out-patient clinics and joined the throng there.

Even then the Guildford area was ahead of most other areas with Dr Michael Smith and Jackie Patterson encouraging all health professionals to work together to improve the system. Jackie supported me in setting up a clinic with local GPs that was recognised as an area of good practice, well before financial reward was offered.

What did we do? We attempted to form a diabetes register – remember this was innovative stuff! I seem to remember ours was a card index box filed according to date of birth! We invited those on our register to attend our mini-clinic where we checked blood pressure, sent off blood samples for investigation and advised on how to reduce the risks associated with diabetes. We became part of a team including dietitians and podiatrists (although the latter were known as chiropodists then).

Training for the new role for practice nurses was difficult to come by. Fortunately our local Health Authority then was keen to support education and local courses were set up. This legacy continues with the Guildford area having a high proportion of trained nurses and GPs, continuing updates and 'shared care' meetings between primary (GP) and secondary (Consultant led specialist) teams. Structured education for people with diabetes followed and is gradually being introduced and is a priority in future developments.

How has practice nursing changed? Practice Nurses now are encouraged to work WITH people with diabetes rather than AT them. There is still a need to check blood pressure, take blood for investigations and provide advice but the method of doing so is changing. Practice Nurses now provide joint diabetes/heart clinics, participate in planning care with people with diabetes, negotiate goals and targets with patients, provide up to date relevant literature and can be seen as the linchpin in the GP service. Many now are capable of prescribing. They have more Specialist Nurses, of which I am now one, to call on. We are fortunate indeed in Guildford to have enthusiastic teams who strive to work together - including people with diabetes. Long may it continue.

*Gwen Hall, Diabetes Specialist  
Nurse/Clinical Educator, Surrey PCT*

Meetings are held on the first Monday of every other month.

**Our venue for meetings is CEDAR, the Centre for Endocrinology, Diabetes and Research, at the Royal Surrey County Hospital.**

Meetings start at 8pm but tea and coffee are available a bit earlier.

If you come by car, parking for 2-4 hours is £4.00 in the hospital car park, but there are a number of parking places for blue badge holders right at the back of the Centre. And staff car parks are quite empty at that time of day.

If you come by train, there are regular buses from the Station.

**If you have email?** Send me an email and you can have this Newsletter that way.

If you have items for the next issue please send them by the 17th July 2009 to: Julie Grist, Editor Holmbury Wheeler Lane Witley, Surrey GU8 5QU 01428 683448 or email [julie.grist@lineone.net](mailto:julie.grist@lineone.net)

## Diabetes Awareness Day, Guildford 6th June 2009

at  
The Guildhall, High Street, Guildford.



This event, organised by the Group, is primarily for people who may have or be at risk of diabetes but are unaware of it.

There will be Specialist Diabetes Nurses and other medical advisers on hand to offer the best advice available for those interested in assessing their risk or pursuing further information.

**Please encourage people to pop in.  
Any time between 10am and 4.30pm.**

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### 'Every Step Counts'

Support National Diabetes Week on Thursday, 18th June 10-12 midday starting at 10am for registration. There's a talk about getting active followed by an 'Access for all' walk and a 'Pram Walk'. YMCA Redhill, Princes Road, RHI 6JJ.

For more information and to register, call the Diabetes Specialist Nurses at East Surrey Hospital on 01737 231 788.

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Next Meeting

#### Monday, 1st June 2009

Diabetes Education - Mapping conversations. A new approach to teaching about diabetes.

*Speaker: Rena Reilly, Senior Research Nurse and Nurse Manager and the Diabetes Specialist Nurses.*

#### Monday 3rd August 2009

Social event—details to be confirmed.

#### Monday 5th October 2009

Current Diabetes Research

*Speaker: Professor David Leslie, St Bartholomew's Hospital, London*

#### Monday 7th December 2010

Christmas Social and slide show by Shirley Hampson

#### Monday 1st February 2010

Does weight really matter in diabetes? The question answered.

*Speaker: Sunil Zachariah, Diabetes Consultant, East Surrey Hospital, Redhill (formerly Research Registrar, Royal Surrey County Hospital)*