

Diabetes UK Local groups: A brief Introduction

Thank you for your interest in setting up a Diabetes UK group. Our network of local groups play a vital role in helping Diabetes UK achieve our mission of improving the lives of people living with diabetes and working towards a world with no diabetes. Local Groups are a key part of making this happen, and we are very grateful to all the volunteers who help run groups and communities across the UK.

Who are we?

Diabetes UK is the leading charity that cares for, connects with and campaigns alongside people with or at risk of diabetes. We:

- Help people manage their diabetes effectively by providing information, advice and support.
- Campaign alongside people with diabetes and with healthcare professionals to improve the quality of care across the UK's health services.
- Fund pioneering research into care, cure and prevention for all types of diabetes.
- Work to prevent the rising number of people diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes through risk assessment, early diagnosis, and by communicating how healthy lifestyle choices can help many people avoid or delay its onset.

Why become a Diabetes UK group?

All local groups are formally part of Diabetes UK, and as such operate under Diabetes UK's charity number. The advantages of having your group be part of Diabetes UK includes:

- Receiving a £250 start-up grant
- Access to a bank account for your group
- Access to training and support
- Access to resources including templates and guides
- Activities are covered by our insurance
- Use the Diabetes UK name and logo.
- Central promotion
- Access to a free website
- Support around campaigning and fundraising
- Support from your local office
- Support accessing local diabetes and healthcare networks

- Free Diabetes UK membership for the three main officers of the group committee (Chair, Treasurer, Secretary)

Do you want to be a formal or informal group?

Within Diabetes UK we differentiate groups in two ways, one is a formal local group, and the other is an informal group (volunteer community). Local groups are formed with a committee of at least 3 people, and run lots of different activities which means that they tend to accumulate expenses and need a bank account. Volunteer Communities are more informal as they are just run by one person, with more informal activities which do not need funding to run, and therefore do not need a bank account. Your local office can help you decide which type is best for you.

How should our group run?

Across the UK there are over 300 local groups, and we would encourage anyone wanting to set up a group to visit some to see how different they are and get ideas for how you would want to run your own group.

Our groups range from those that are focused on supporting families and parents to those with a wider focus on adults with type 1 and type 2 diabetes. Some groups meet monthly, others quarterly, some have very formal meetings with speakers, and others are Facebook based and just get together in a pub to chat every now and again. The key thing is to find a style that works for you and the people you are trying to help.

What do Diabetes UK local groups do?

Although every group is different, there are some common threads that groups focus on which includes:

Provide support and information

Sometimes there is nothing better than support from people with similar experiences. The fantastic work that our local groups around the UK do, helps us to bring more people with diabetes together.

Raise awareness

As well as providing support and information to local people with diabetes, our groups also raise awareness and public knowledge of diabetes and Diabetes UK locally.

Fundraise

Local groups also fundraise to sustain their activities and many also raise funds to support the work of Diabetes UK. Over the years groups have raised funds which have gone towards a range of pioneering diabetes research projects.

Campaign

Groups can also choose to become a campaigning hub and be a strong and major voice for people living with diabetes locally.