

## Starting a local group committee and recruiting committee members

### What is this Guide For?

Most Diabetes UK local groups are run by a volunteer committee, which consist of a minimum of three key committee members. Running a group involves a fair degree of teamwork and commitment, but is very rewarding.

The aim of this guide is to provide information on how to start a group committee and recruit committee members on an ongoing basis.

### What are the aims of the committee?

- To make decisions as a team on the running of the group and programme of activities.
- To be a core team of volunteers who are involved in running the group to ensure that it can continue to support the local community.
- To ensure the group is run in line with the *Diabetes UK Local Group Agreement*.

### What committee roles are there?

Each group committee should have the following three main roles:

**Chair:** Ensures the smooth running of the group and leads the activities of the group, to chair meetings and to act as a local representative of Diabetes UK as appropriate

**Treasurer:** Responsible for the finances of the group

**Secretary:** Provides administrative and secretarial support to the group including arranging meetings, producing newsletters and being a main point of contact for members and people interested in joining the group.

You will find *role descriptions* for the above role on the *Local Groups Portal* with additional information on the activities involved and skills required. You should also appoint a safeguarding point of contact-please see the *Safeguarding section* of the *Local Groups Portal* for more information

Other roles can be flexible depending on who is involved and what the group needs to run successfully. Examples of other committee roles include Website Editor, Fundraising Officer, Membership Secretary, Newsletter Editor and Vice Chair.

### Who can be a committee member?

Anyone can be a committee member. It is really important to have committee members who have the skills and time to undertake a role. It is a good idea to advertise the opportunity to

be a committee member as widely as possible, to ensure different skills are brought into the group.

## How should we select committee members and why is succession planning important?

Committee members can come forward at any point and start carrying out a role with the agreement of the rest of the committee. Each of the officer roles is to be confirmed annually at the Group's Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The *Local Group Agreement* states that the three main officer posts should not serve a term of longer than 6 years with a staggered rotation being strongly recommended. This has been put in place to encourage a culture of rotation. This will help your group to avoid becoming dependent on a small number of individuals and to prevent individuals from becoming overburdened. Having a fixed term also helps attract people to the roles as the commitment is clear. Ultimately, this will help your group to be sustainable for the future.

It is important to think about succession planning, especially for your main three committee roles well in advance of your AGM when you know that a committee member is stepping down. Communicate with other committee members and group members to encourage them to come forward for the role and advertise the role externally using the below tips on recruiting committee members.

## Top tips for creating committee roles?

- Make a full list of current tasks and list other possible roles.
- Do roles need splitting to ensure an even workload?
- Look at what the group plans to do in the months ahead – do you need someone with specific skills to take on events or new projects?
- Think ahead for succession planning: does someone think they might like to retire, or change roles, in a year or so?
- Create a role description for each committee role. You can use the *Diabetes UK template role description* to help you. You will find this on the *Local Groups Portal*

## How can I recruit new committee members?

There are many ways you can recruit committee members from outside the group. Below are a few ways you can do this:

### Have a public meeting

At your initial meeting to get the group up and running ask for volunteers to join the committee and follow up with these people. Speak to your local diabetes UK contact about organising your first public meeting

### Word of Mouth

Get your family, friends or colleagues involved. Ask them to spread the word.

### Online

- If you have set up a group website you can advertise roles on there
- There are online websites which can be used to advertise your role such as <http://www.do-it.org.uk/>.

## Volunteer Centres

Volunteer centres exist across the country and their aim is to help local organisations recruit volunteers in their area. You can find your local volunteer centre by visiting <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/>

## Media

Your local press may also offer free advertising space for local charity groups. See the resource on *Promoting your group through the local media* in the *promoting your group* section of the *Local Groups Portal*.

## Local Events

Create a flyer you can give out when you hold an event such as a meeting, stall or supermarket collection. See template resources in the *promoting your group* section of the *Local Groups Portal*.

## Noticeboards

Put up a flyer in Libraries or other community noticeboards.

## Reach

Recruits experienced professionals to volunteer their time. For more information visit their website below, or give them a call on 020 7582 2423  
[www.volwork.org.uk](http://www.volwork.org.uk)



### What should I think about when creating an ad?

- The role description can be used a guide to writing an ad.
- Think about the role and the sort of person you need – plan the ad accordingly. The wording for an ad for a fundraiser will be very different from one for a membership secretary.
- Think about the place you are advertising and who is going to look at this.
- The more succinct and precise the information you have in the ad the more likely people are to notice and read it. An intriguing title will make people read on, e.g. *'can you add up?'* when advertising for a new treasurer.
- Get someone else to proof read and comment, and don't forget the contact person and phone number/email address. A phone call or email is easier for someone than writing.
- **Be positive** about your group and the role.

### How can my local Diabetes UK office help me?

- Help you think about the roles you need and help you design role descriptions
- We can publicise your role to current volunteers who volunteer in other roles at Diabetes UK.
- On your behalf we can help promote the role in local media, volunteer centres, online, in our newsletters and to Diabetes UK members.