

Newsletter 25th October 2018

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We meet in the Diabetes Centre St. Richards Hospital Chichester for 7.30pm. Easy access for wheelchairs. All welcome.

Chichester & District DIABETES UK Group

Know Diabetes Fight Diabetes

Charity Number 215199

Patron Her Majesty the Queen

We welcomed 19 people to our meeting.

Unfortunately our scheduled speaker was unable to attend but we have her rebooked for next year.

Pauline spoke to Chris about filling in and he did a really good job. He produced a PowerPoint presentation and gave his talk like a professional.

The whole group were well and truly engaged with what he had to say.

At the end of his talk he was able to answer many questions about his experiences.

Chris's journey to diabetes was certainly an interesting experience for all of us to hear. He told how he was in the navy for many years and visited many countries. After retiring from this career he had the opportunity to work in Brunei, Borneo. I don't think many of us realised what a small part of Borneo Brunei is. His family lived with thick jungle literally at the end of the garden. Leaving a door open was an invitation for orangutans to help themselves to dinner.

The country may be very small but it is also very wealthy and takes good care of its people, providing them

with free housing and medical care.

All changed for Chris when there was a huge jungle fire causing major devastation to the area. Not only the jungle but the water services were damaged causing contamination of the water supply.

After several months of feeling very unwell and even after visiting the hospital he and his family decided that they needed to return to the UK and left the country they had enjoyed for more than a decade.

On returning to the UK and feeling even worse he ended up in A & E where he had emergency surgery to remove a large part of his upper intestinal tract. This was still not the end of his problem and eventually had to have more of his lower intestines removed. He was left hoping that this was the end of his ill health.

Unfortunately things were still not right. Returning several times to see his GP he was told he had T2 diabetes prescribed metformin and told they would see him again in a year.

Chris was not happy about this and rang Diabetes UK who advised him to come to our group meetings.

After talking to members he arranged for himself to see a diabetes consultant which he did. He was told he had T1 diabetes and definitely not T2. If he had waited another year he would have been in serious trouble.

This was when Chris became part of our group.

The moral of his story is to take charge of your own health. If you feel that there is something wrong then find out more and insist on further tests.

If needs be change doctors as Chris did. Regrettably some areas are not as good as others with the level of diabetes care.

This is very much a potted version of the talk that Chris gave. He kept us all on our toes when he asked us if we could tell him all the symptoms that point to diabetes.

He emphasised the importance of our need to take care of our own treatment and to work hard to be sure we are getting the best care available.

By attending our group meetings Chris felt more empowered to question his own healthcare.



Our next meeting is on the 22nd of November 2018

This will be our annual social evening, a chance to mingle try the quiz and enjoy a glass of wine.

*Please bring a small plate of food to share.
A raffle prize would be appreciated.*



Future meetings 2019

28th February

**Diabetes Consultant
The Importance of good control.**



28th March

**AGM
And general discussion.**



25th April

Psychologist Coping with Diabetes



23rd May

Bariatric Consultant.

A look back in time to life before and just after Insulin was discovered.

Frederick Banting came up with the idea which led to the discovery of insulin right here at Banting House in 1920. Although the idea of insulin was new, the effects of diabetes were not – for many thousands of years, people had been suffering and dying from the disease. So how did doctors help them before insulin had been discovered?

Diabetes was first described in Ancient Egypt around 3500 BCE. Ever since then, physicians around the world tried to test and treat the “sugar sickness”, as it was called; however, with insulin still unknown, diabetics were doomed to waste away. Doctors in Egypt, India, and Greece all watched as the patients they desperately tried to save inevitably fell into comas and died.

During the 18th century, doctors began to understand that diet played a role in diabetes, and that with modification of the diet, its effects could be slowed. They aimed to limit carbohydrates, and increase fat and protein levels in the food that diabetics ate. Fad diets for the desperate in this time included the “oat cure”, “potato therapy”, the “rice cure”, and opium – few of which did anything to help.

Just before Banting discovered insulin, a new and somewhat effective treatment was being promoted by Dr. Frederick Allen and Dr. Elliot Joslin, the world’s leading diabetologists. The Allen Diet was an individualized starvation diet which limited carbs along with calories for people with diabetes. For some people, the diet consisted of only 400 calories a day – barely anything! It was difficult for patients to follow, especially children, who often did not understand the importance of their diet restrictions. One boy was so desperate for food that he ate his pet canary’s birdseed, causing him to fall into a coma and die. While the diet allowed some patients to live long enough to see the discovery of insulin, most were not so lucky and some even starved to death.

After Frederick Banting discovered insulin, the lives of diabetics everywhere changed forever – they were no longer forced to live on a starvation diet, waiting for their death. Instead, they were given the opportunity to live a full and happy life, which included eating whatever they wanted. Banting supported people with diabetes being able to eat normally – he thought they deserved to live life to the fullest. However, many doctors trained in the “pre-insulin school of thought”, as

he called it, continued to place diabetics on a bland diet lacking in taste, flavor and options.

Today, diabetic diets are still a contentious issue – generally, they focus on a balanced diet which is low in saturated fats and processed sugars, and high in soluble fiber. The main concern when discussing diabetic diet is not death, but rather kidney failure and macrovascular disease.

Thanks to the discovery of insulin, it is easy to take for granted the effective treatment of diabetes. Yet not even a hundred years ago, the treatments for diabetes were unthinkable to us today. It is a lasting testament to the great discovery of Sir Frederick Banting, and a reminder that we are lucky for the treatment available today.

This post was written by Kylie Smith. Kylie recently graduated with a B.A. in history and anthropology from The University of Western Ontario, and will be attending teachers college in the fall.

This article made me realise just how lucky I am to have the medical care and technology that is available today.

See you on the 22nd November.
Pauline