

DSN Forum newsletter – December 2020

Well, what an exciting and busy Diabetes Awareness Month we've had. Despite being in a second UK lockdown there has still been lots happening during this very important month, and you all know we love to get involved!

Diabetes Professional Care (DPC) 2020

This month we saw the first ever virtual DPC. Of course, we would have loved if we could have all got together to meet up with our colleagues from across the country, but due to lockdown this was not possible. Throughout the pandemic, all healthcare professionals have been working flat out, and it's been hard to speak with other colleagues outside of our Trusts about anything other than COVID-19. So it was nice to be able to take a few days' study leave to listen to other experiences of how clinicians have adapted to care for people during the pandemic.

The DSN Forum played a large part in the DPC programme this year, with sessions from all four of us on topics such as injection technique, the future of diabetes nursing, local service initiatives and what it's like being the only DSN in the village (or rather, PCN). We heard from guest speakers such as Sam Barnard, who is leading a project including drive-through HbA_{1c} testing; Julie Brake, who is doing virtual education for healthcare professionals; and Alison Cox, who gave us some top tips on how to make the most out of virtual reviews.

Amanda's highlight session was "Developing the DSN nursing role in challenging times". She was joined by Lesley Mills, Alison Cox, Debbie Hicks and our own Beth Kelly. Together, they talked about how nurses have coped with the pandemic and how things have now changed for the next generation. Also discussed was what the future holds in general for nursing. There were also some enjoyable sessions on obesity and type 2 diabetes remission. It's quite fascinating trying to identify

and empower people prevent type 2 diabetes before they are diagnosed.

We loved being a part of the programme! Here's to next year – hopefully we can all celebrate in person.

New DSN Forum website

In preparation for World Diabetes Day, we thought it was about time to update our website to a new, modern, shiny version! The website address hasn't changed but the design and features certainly have. The site is designed to help healthcare professionals navigate the vast amount of ever-changing online diabetes resources and allowing easy access by providing all the links to the relevant resources in one place.

The sections on the website include About Us, What's New, HCP Resources and DSN Forum Stories. The links provided on the site are available purely for the sharing of best practice and dissemination of information. There are no financial interests or incentives in the decision to post links either.

We update the site regularly, so if there is something we've missed, please get in touch. We do also have an A-Z list of diabetes teams across the UK, with links to their NHS Trust web pages. If you would like yours to be added, please let us know. Our website can be accessed here: www.diabetesspecialistnurseforumuk.co.uk

World Diabetes Day

As we all know, World Diabetes Day happens every year on 14th November, the birthday of Sir Frederick Banting, who co-discovered insulin in 1921. This year the theme was "Nurses make the difference", and with that in mind, along with it being the Year of the Nurse and Midwife, we set to work. We were lucky enough to be able to organise a message from the Chief Nursing Officer of England, [Ruth May](#), thanking all of the nurses and midwives involved in diabetes care who have

Amanda Epps

Adult Diabetes Specialist Nurse, Medway NHS Foundation Trust

Beth Kelly

Community Diabetes Specialist Nurse, Southampton City – Solent NHS Trust

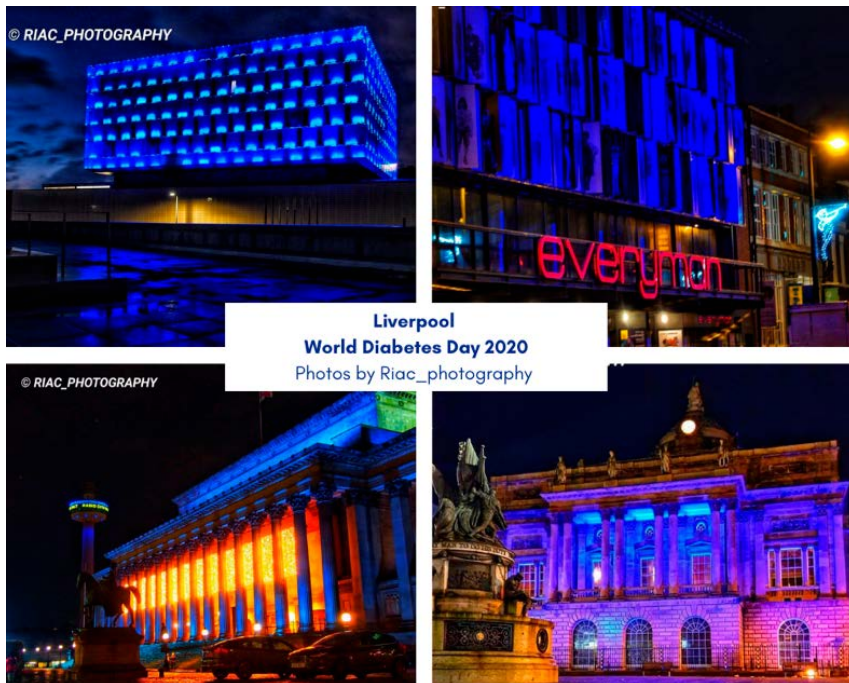
Vicki Alabraba

Adult Diabetes Specialist Nurse, Liverpool Diabetes Partnership, Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Tamsin Fletcher-Salt

Clinical Diabetes Nurse Specialist, Royal Stoke University Hospital

Citation: Epps A, Kelly B, Alabraba V, Fletcher-Salt T (2020) DSN Forum newsletter – December 2020. *Journal of Diabetes Nursing* 24: JDN167



Photos by [@Riac_photography](#).

worked so hard this year. Her video was shared first within our closed Facebook group for our 1600 members to see, and then across all our social media channels. In case you missed it, the video can be [viewed here](#).

Diabetes UK also had their #NailingDiabetes campaign for World Diabetes Day, which involved painting your nails blue to raise awareness. We saw a fair few blue nails, including Chris Askew, CEO of Diabetes UK, and Mel C also featured her blue nails on Saturday Kitchen on the day itself. Many people chose to wear blue on the day, and several areas managed to shine a blue light on diabetes, with many well-known and iconic buildings being lit up to mark the special day. The Liverpool Diabetes Team managed the record to date of the highest number of buildings across the city to shine blue. We counted 15 in total, including the Mersey Gateway Bridge, the Radio City Tower and the Greystone Bridge over the M62 as you enter Liverpool. This took a lot of organising but was totally worth it!

Vicki also managed to spread the word about World Diabetes Day across the local airwaves, with an interview on BBC Radio Merseyside on the day itself. If you missed it, the recording can be [found here](#).

The 14th November was not only World Diabetes Day but it also marked the inaugural [United Through Diabetes Conference](#). DRWF and DPC teamed up to offer a unique virtual wellness day for people with diabetes. The aim of the conference was to bridge the gap between healthcare professionals and people living with diabetes via a patient-led conference and interactive exhibition designed to provide up-to-date education and inspirational sessions to help people living with all types of diabetes. The conference was started with a keynote presentation from Partha Kar. The DSN Forum also presented on “Injecting your insulin safely and effectively”. There were numerous interesting sessions throughout the day covering lots of different subjects, and the DSN Forum were proud to be invited to speak at the event.

The DSN Forum was also very excited and proud to be involved in the new [#UnderstandingDiabetes](#) campaign in preparation for World Diabetes Day. Read Amanda’s interview [here](#). Amanda was also on BBC Radio Northampton ahead of World Diabetes Day, raising awareness about diabetes and promoting United Through Diabetes. If you missed it, her interview can be [found here](#).

Next year marks the 100th anniversary since insulin was first discovered, which of course will make World Diabetes Day extra special, so let’s get planning!

DSN Forum LIVE Saturday Brunch

On 21st November we went LIVE for our very first “Brunch with the DSN Forum”. If it’s good enough for Phil and Holly, we thought, why not for us too?

We had some special guests for Saturday brunch: Professors Partha Kar and Gerry Rayman joined us to talk over the NHS *Getting It Right First Time* report, which was released just in time for World Diabetes Day. The report can be [accessed here](#).

The report, which was written over the last year following face-to-face visits from Partha and Gerry to almost every site (until COVID happened), looks at specialist teams in diabetes around the UK, bringing together recommendations from across the board on how we can improve diabetes care together. It also gives some inspiration from teams who did well in certain areas. Some key



recommendations coming out of the report highlighted the need for inpatient DSNs in every hospital. Other key comments alluded to multidisciplinary foot teams as well as psychological support for the young-adult age group. These are aspects that we all know we need to improve on.

The data was really important and gives us all something to take back to commissioners and show them how vital DSN work is. Partha did remind us of the £75 million Transformation Funds that are up for grabs for improving our services. To listen

back to his and Gerry's top tips on how to access these funds, you can access our brunch chat via our [YouTube channel](#).

The great news is that we plan to do this monthly or every other month, highlighting the various work of multidisciplinary team members within the diabetes speciality. Next month we will have the NHS England Advisory team for diabetes: Professors Partha Kar and Jonathan Valabhji. We have some super-amazing people lined up for croissants and coffee, so do keep your eyes peeled!

Merry Christmas!

As we make our way out of lockdown into the Tier system, we live in hope that a vaccine will soon be available. Hospitals are still struggling with admissions and routine services are still being affected. Sadly, only one of the DSN Forum team is out of Tier 3, so Vicki will have to have a meal and a drink for the rest of us – if she can escape from her children! On a positive note, however, the gyms have reopened and we will all be able to get our hair cut again in preparation for Christmas, although Christmas will surely be totally different this year. ■

Diabetes Specialist
Nurse Forum UK

Follow the DSN Forum on:

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Website](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Instagram](#)

[TikTok](#)