

Dr Colin Kenny awarded the British Empire Medal



On Thursday 27th September, in the Queen's Birthday Honours, Dr Colin Kenny received the British Empire Medal for services to diabetes care in Northern Ireland from the Lord Lieutenant of Co. Down, Mr David Lindsay, in Hillsborough Castle, Hillsborough. He was accompanied by his wife and two of his children.

It was a very enjoyable and a well attended ceremony. The Lord Lieutenant commented on Colin's general practice work, as well as his publications and teaching roles in the area of diabetes.

In this feature, *Diabetes & Primary Care* and the Primary Care Diabetes Society pay tribute to Colin and reflect on his legacy in diabetes care.

Tributes from Colin's PCDS colleagues past and present



Pam Brown

GP in Swansea and Editor-in-Chief, *Diabetes & Primary Care*

Colin and I have been friends and colleagues since 1986, when, as formative members of the Primary Care Rheumatology (PCR) Society, we collaborated to develop Colin's vision for *Joint Challenge*, one of the first e-learning GP courses in the UK, and PCR's Bath University diploma. These were Colin's first forays into medical education, achieving huge impact. Seeking to translate his success to diabetes, Colin, ably supported by colleagues here, set up Primary Care Diabetes and later the Primary Care Diabetes Society (PCDS).

As Editor-in-Chief of *Diabetes & Primary Care*, Colin built on the legacy created by Eugene Hughes and, with Gwen Hall's support, continued to educate primary care teams, and to contribute to high standards of care delivery. Colin spearheaded the IDF curriculum-based journal modules, providing a comprehensive programme of high-

quality, free education for busy primary care professionals. Colin continues to be generous with his time in inputting to and overseeing the development of PCDS educational initiatives, including his current innovation, *Diabetes Distilled*.

Throughout more than three decades, Colin has demonstrated his knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment to diabetes education and care, for the huge benefit of his patients and ourselves as colleagues. As a family doctor and an educationalist, Colin has made a significant contribution to the quality of diabetes care delivered not just in Northern Ireland but across the UK, and now also internationally. He continues to contribute creativity, determination, hard work and enthusiasm for all things diabetes-related, and is a supportive friend and colleague. He truly deserves this recognition of his career-long commitment to diabetes.



Nigel Campbell

GP, Lisburn

Colin is a worthy recipient of this award. He has tirelessly championed the cause of diabetes care and education in Northern Ireland over several decades. His dedication to both remains, and I owe my place within PCDS to his enthusiastic encouragement.

Colin is passionate about diabetes care in the primary care setting and, to start with, he and Dr Tony O’Sullivan (Dublin) organised an all-Ireland conference at Malahide, Dublin, in 2007. It was a great success and the conference continues, now under the umbrella of the PCDS. The separate

NI conference commenced in 2010 and also runs annually. Colin takes a prominent role in organising these meetings, and their continued success is mostly down to his hard work.

Beyond the conferences, Colin also edited *Diabetes & Primary Care*, our in-house magazine, for several years, and he continues to edit *Diabetes Distilled*, which is a valuable resource for busy members of the primary care team. He is widely known in Northern Ireland and his colleagues will understand how deserving he is of this recognition.



Gwen Hall

Independent Diabetes Specialist Nurse, Surrey

I had to look back in my records to find how long I have had the pleasure, and honour, of working with Colin. It’s a lot!

He, along with others, was responsible for the birth of the PCDS and he continues to be heavily involved today. He is an ideas man. Not content with being just a GP, he led the PCDS, instigated a rolling programme of education for healthcare

professionals and edited the *Diabetes & Primary Care* journal. I had the privilege of working with him in that capacity and still marvel at the innovations he comes up with. He must have had a huge impact on diabetes management over the years and I am proud to have been there and benefitted from his talent.

Congratulations Colin!



Eugene Hughes

GP, Isle of Wight

I first met Colin Kenny over 20 years ago when we were both involved in setting up the group known as PCD (Primary Care Diabetes). This group had a turbulent existence, and was eventually taken under the umbrella of Diabetes UK. This was not a happy marriage, and members of the group were transferred to other sections and committees, effectively diluting our influence and power.

I remember clearly receiving a phone call from Colin late one evening. He simply said “How do you feel about jumping into that same river

again?” By this he meant that a few like-minded individuals were thinking about setting up a primary care diabetes group outside the control of Diabetes UK. He had my full support and the PCDS was born. Colin went on to lead the group with drive, imagination, fairness and diplomacy, all the qualities we have come to associate with the man.

The history of primary care diabetes over the past 25 years will return time and time again to the name of Colin Kenny – teacher, organiser, editor, leader, friend.



Neil Munro

Visiting Professor in Primary Care Diabetes, University of Surrey

I was delighted to hear of Colin’s award of the British Empire Medal. It is richly deserved.

I first saw Colin (many years ago) address primary care professionals at a British diabetes annual conference on the past, present and future role of the sector in diabetes care in the UK. He is a gifted and often passionate speaker, who very quickly engages with his audience.

He was a principal lead in the establishment of PCD in 1996, at a time when like-minded people felt that primary care professionals needed a more robust voice within the world of diabetes. This was quite a contentious move at the time.

I strongly supported the creation of the society and it was a privilege to be a member of this group. The significant success of PCDS bears testament to the unmet need that existed at that time, and to the skill and entrepreneurial spirit of the officers both then and now.

A great debater, Colin is able to clearly articulate his views in a way that can prove difficult to challenge. His clinical and research knowledge is exemplary and he is held in high esteem by all in the diabetes world. He has done a great deal to raise the profile and status of primary care diabetes both here and abroad. We all owe him a debt of gratitude. ■