



## Diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes

### Colin McGreal – Type 1 Patient

Well, I as an individual sailed. I was sailing, racing yachts and working with that kind of industry and I have a twin brother. My twin brother passed away in 2001 and the week of his burial, of his passing happened and four days later, I was unwell and I was then attacked by my mother with a prod on my finger and it showed that I was off the scale. It said high.

I went to see Professor Took who was our consultant for my brother about this and he said, you have diabetes type one. I said, but how? And he said, you just have it. You are a single cell twin and you did so well not having it and now you have it. And so that was it. So my whole life changed. Everything about it changed.

### Kay Johnson – Type 1 Patient

This April, it'll be 28 years. So, I was very poorly at the time, losing weight rapidly, sleeping all the time, having blood tests every three or four weeks. I didn't know then but I was in the honeymoon period, so all my blood tests were coming back fine. I went from eight and a half stone to four and then at one stage I came down for results of my blood tests and was rushed into hospital with ketosis. I spent 12 days in the hospital, got on the insulin.

### Sharon Blatcher – Type 1 Patient

So, I found it really difficult then to be diagnosed with type one diabetes and I didn't know at that stage, at all what it was having had no background knowledge, anything was available. Nobody used to talk about it. And I found that a real struggle to actually get my head around what was going on.

### Colin McGreal – Type 1 Patient

I realized that, being a diabetic and changing my career to working within the design industry, I was traveling all over the country and having meetings in one part of the country, then rush into the car, rush down to the other side of the country for another meeting. And I found that all very difficult to manage my diabetes. In fact, it was managing me because I was having meals at the wrong time of day. I was having my injections at the wrong time of day and I felt uncomfortable. So I just found it very difficult indeed to just understand how I could deal with this or even the consequences of what I was doing.

### Rizwana Ali – Type 1 Patient

When I was about 25, 30, I couldn't manage it properly. Although I have had help with the dieticians and stuff, but I could never, because I was young, eating the wrong food and stuff like that. But, afterwards, I started eating proper foods, thinking that I need to take control of this diabetes and diabetes is not to take control over me.



## **Sharon Blatcher – Type 1 Patient**

I found it a really long lonely journey for quite some time. I didn't feel like I could discuss it with family or friends because no one actually understood what I was going through. I was struggling to understand what was happening at that time myself but I did was actually using an insulin pen at the time and I was administering that twice, two or three times a day, initially, but I'm still not really working out what I need to do to get it right. It was a long, long time before I actually got any understanding.

## **Kay Johnson – Type 1 Patient**

The best thing that was ever said to me as I was leaving the hospital, the consultant actually said, Kay, come back here. And I came back and he said, just remember this, please always respect your diabetes, but it lives with you. You don't live with it. And that's what I did. I mean it was very frightening but I've always respected it.

## **Colin McGreal – Type 1 Patient**

It's a heck of a journey because everything you do absolutely everything with no omissions has a consequence as a diabetic. Everything that you do has a consequence.

Whatever you do in the journey of the day. I'm awake, I start the day. It's got to be considered. You can't just sort of get in your car and drive because all of a sudden, because you've just been so busy, you took the car and drive. You've not checked have you've got some jelly babies? Have you got your insulin with you? Is it, is the cartridge empty? Is it nearly full? Everything you do has to be thought about and that's something you don't always get.

## **Sharon Blatcher – Type 1 Patient**

I have actually read many books that I feel that have helped me actually to understand what's going on in my world. That's how I think about my diabetes and it actually develops your knowledge and it helps you to understand it's not just you. There's actually hundreds, thousands of people actually going through the same thing as you. Also like the daily fights that they go through and what they do to overcome those situations and it, but it just shows it's a really personal fight and also that people actually deal with it in so many different ways but at the end of the day, it's about giving yourself a bit of slack and actually just understanding. It might just be one day that's out of control in a whole year. Don't beat yourself up about it.

## **Kay Johnson – Type 1 Patient**

And the other thing that helps me tremendously is this great support I get from the practice diabetic nurse here, my GP and the consultant at the pump clinic. All brilliant.

It doesn't stop me doing anything. Not even having a girly night out on the Prosecco.

