

When support is just a phone call away

For Jim Hosford Lynch, support from Diabetes Ireland was key after his Type 2 diabetes diagnosis, writes **Deborah Condon**



about all the different aspects of diabetes care in an informal environment.

Jim says that he was overweight at the time of his diagnosis, weighing in at over 102kg (just over 16 stone). His aim was to get below 95kg and he now weighs around 94kg (14 stone, 11lbs).

Support is key

He says that support is key when it comes to diabetes. His wife and three sons have been a huge support to him and he socialises more with them now than prior to his diagnosis.

However, he advises anyone with concerns or even basic questions to contact Diabetes Ireland.

“Your GP is a general doctor with a limited time slot to speak to you, but if you contact Diabetes Ireland, you get the support you need. I consider Diabetes Ireland like my family now because I know I can pick up the phone to them and get an answer straight away,” Jim says.

He notes that while he is “very satisfied” with his health at the moment, “I know that if I take my eye off the ball, I will be in a place that I can’t come back from”.

“But you wouldn’t lift a heavy load on your own and that is like diabetes, you need support. I would advise anyone with diabetes to contact Diabetes Ireland and get the support you need. With a bit of get up and go, and the support of Diabetes Ireland, you will manage this and move towards a better life,” he adds.

The Diabetes Ireland helpline is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, on (01) 842 8118 or to contact the Cork Care Centre directly on 021 427 4229

knew what was wrong

“It’s like when your car is not doing what it is supposed to. You bring it to the mechanic and they check the engine and find something wrong. They tell you that you have to modify your driving and look after the engine better. It is the same with diabetes,” he suggests.

Ringing helpline

Jim did not know anything about diabetes when he was diagnosed, so he rang Diabetes Ireland “straight away”. He initially rang the Dublin-based helpline, and they gave him the number of the Cork Care Centre.

He says that he talked through everything with Diabetes Ireland and they gave him valuable information. In fact, he believes he would not have achieved pre-diabetes levels without the help of Diabetes Ireland.

“My big weakness is that I had a sweet tooth and it was very hard giving up the sweet stuff, but Diabetes Ireland talked me through it all. They suggested I attend CODE and that woke me up to what I was doing wrong,” he recalls.

CODE (Community Orientated Diabetes Education) is Diabetes Ireland’s group education programme for people with Type 2 diabetes or diagnosed pre-diabetes. CODE aims to teach people

Jim Hosford Lynch believes that if you put the time and effort into something, you will reap the rewards. That is the attitude he took when he was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes in early 2019.

Through hard work and dedication, he went from having an initial HbA1c of 86mmol/mol (or 10%) to now being at pre-diabetes levels.

The retired worker from just outside of Cork city, who turns 67 this year, is also a cancer survivor. He knew something was amiss due to the tiredness he was experiencing and feared that perhaps, his cancer had returned.

“I could sleep for 14 hours straight and I would still feel tired afterwards and I was so thirsty,” he recalls.

He visited his GP on a Monday and that Friday, the GP rang him with the results.

“He told me he needed to see me in the next half hour. I was in the horrors because I thought, the cancer is back and I may only have ‘x’ amount of time left,” he explains.

However, it was to be a different diagnosis – Type 2 diabetes – that awaited Jim. He says that he was relieved it was not cancer and that at least now he