**A *healthier you*** *- Diabetes prevention programme*

*A patient's perspective*

About 6 months ago I was told that a blood test showed *pre-diabe*tes. This alarmed me as I know that diabetes can bring with it nerve pain, eye problems and in some cases can lead to limbs being amputated.

The surgery was supporting a diabetes prevention programme ([http*s://www*.england.nhs.uk*/*diabetes/diabetes-prevention*/*](https://www.england.nhs.uk/diabetes/diabetes-prevention/)) and it was suggested I went.

The programme consists of a one-and-a-half-hour group meeting for four consecutive weeks and then further monthly meetings, and is held locally – in my case at the Pearson Centre.

Ten of us turned up aged, I guess, between 40 and 75 and all of us overweight! Our *health and wellbeing coach* was young, enthusiastic and had considerable knowledge of the subject. He gave us a booklet explaining what the course was about and off we went.

Perhaps unsurprisingly we started each session with a weigh-in as weight is such a critical factor in diabetes. Throughout the programme we were asked to contribute our thoughts, but there was no pressure to do so.

Topics covered were how the body processes insulin, the types of food we eat and why some foods are better for us than others. We looked at food labelling and portion control and finally exercise. I thought I was reasonably well informed about what I ate but I found lots of new information from this programme.

What have I done? Well I have had to give up milk chocolate, though the craving is still there. I occasionally have a bar of black 90% pure chocolate which is much healthier. I have certainly reduced my potato input, replacing it with more vegetables I am now also very *a*ware of how many calories there are in beer and when I feel the need for a snack am more inclined to think of a raw carrot rather than a bag of crisps!

My food intake and energy output are now in balance, but to lose excess weight I have increased my physical activity substantially, (being retired has given the me the time to do this). I am now in the 'just overweight' category.

The biggest risk to the new me will come in the depth of winter when my mood is low and comfort eating can offer solace.

This *diabetes prevention* programme has enormously improved my own health and so I would give it a top recommendation for others.

(Valley surgery patient December 2019)