

Diabetes Awareness

A community event for the people of Swindon

Contents

Contents.....	1
About Healthwatch Swindon.....	2
What we did.....	2
About NEC Care.....	3
Why?	3
What we heard?	4
Acknowledgements.....	6
Appendix.....	6

About Healthwatch Swindon

Healthwatch Swindon is the towns independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to make sure that those running services, put people at the heart of care.

As an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure that NHS leaders and other decision makers listen to your feedback and use it to improve standards of care.

We are here to listen and understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf.

We focus on ensuring that people's worries and concerns about current services are addressed. We are totally independent and can provide you with impartial and independent signposting advice.

We are part of a network of 150 local Healthwatch across England and cover the whole of Swindon

What we did

Working with NEC Care who provide the Diabetic Eye Screening for the NHS, we hosted a free event for the people of Swindon. The aim of the event was to both raise awareness and provide information to help people live well with diabetes.

We invited various organisations, each offering support to help manage lifestyle choices and improve overall wellbeing at a central location in Swindon. These included Pharmacy, Diabetic Eye Screening, a Diabetic Nurse, Swindon Borough Council Live Well team, Xyla Health's Diabetes Prevention, Healthwatch, NHS Talking Therapies, Wiltshire Sight and Diabetes UK.

IN COLLABORATION NHS SERVICES & HEALTHWATCH SWINDON

Swindon Diabetes Awareness Morning
Saturday 23rd March

Get all the expert advice you need in one place direct from

DIABETES HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

9 - 11.30am
Central Community Centre
Emlyn Square, Swindon SN1 5BP
Enquiries to 01225 582303

healthwatch Swindon
NHS

About NEC Care

NEC Care is part of the health division of NEC Software Solutions, which is a global organisation that builds software and services.

NEC Care delivers the national diabetic eye screening programme across several regions in England and Ireland. Their mission, vision and values are to provide people-centric services that aim to improve the health and wellbeing of those they serve.

The BSW Diabetic Eye Screening Programme provides retinal screening clinics and image grading to people with diabetes in Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW). They are commissioned by NHS England to provide retinal screening on behalf of the NHS and their service is compliant with the National Service Framework (NSF) and National Screening Committee (NSC) guidance, standards, and objectives. They serve a population of c. 61,000 people with diabetes of which they screened around 52,000 in 2023-24.

Why?

In October 2023 we co-hosted our first Diabetes Event with NEC Care, Diabetic eye screening team. During which we received feedback and requests from attendees to hold another.

Following a change in venue, this year we were able to offer expertise from Nurses and Pharmacists to eye screening and more.

Swindon is fortunate to benefit from a diverse range of communities, our hope was to provide trusted advice to enable people to proactively manage their health and wellbeing.

The NHS defines diabetes as condition that causes a person's blood sugar level to become too high. There are 2 main types of diabetes:

type 1 diabetes – a lifelong condition where the body's immune system attacks and destroys the cells that produce insulin

type 2 diabetes – where the body does not produce enough insulin, or the body's cells do not react to insulin properly

Type 2 diabetes is far more common than type 1. In the UK, **over 90% of all adults with diabetes have type 2.**

High blood sugar that develops during pregnancy is known as **gestational diabetes**. It usually goes away after giving birth.

[Diabetes - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

With varying symptoms for both type 1 and type 2, it's therefore important to know the key factors that may put you more at risk:

- Living with overweight or obesity
- Not having a healthy diet
- Family history of type 2
- Of Asian, Black African, or African Caribbean origin
- Long term use of certain medicines such as steroids
- Having high blood pressure
- Had gestational diabetes during pregnancy

People living with diabetes or at a higher risk of diabetes are advised to exercise regularly, eat healthily, and maintain a healthy weight. In addition, it is advised to try and cut down on alcohol and quit smoking.

Those diagnosed with diabetes are at an increased risk from diabetic retinopathy and damage to the nerves in their feet. If left un-checked and treated, both can cause life altering issues.

With so many health issues related to diabetes, providing this 'one stop shop' for the people of Swindon, provides the opportunity to reduce the impact of diabetes.

What we heard?

“Really rather perfect for accessibility”

“I thought I could have a finger prick to test my levels”

“Great, will this be run again?”

“It was so useful, not just for me but my parents too”



“Next time, could holistic means of managing diabetes be included, such as maintaining physical health, walking football etc”

“Really need podiatry support as the wait is very long, want to talk to them”

“Really useful to know what the best food is to eat as I am new to this and really do not know”

“The liver scan was really helpful”



“I liked the snacks provided it helps to know what kind of things I can eat”

“I am prediabetic and am not sure what to do, this was really helpful”

“It is hard to get an appointment with a diabetic nurse so being able to talk to one here has been great!”

“Having mental health support here is really good as I need to get some support”

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who attended and of course all the teams and volunteers who donated their time to support the event. Without whom, this would not have been possible.

Wish a special mention to Louise from NEC Care who developed the concept and led the planning and facilitation of the event.



Appendix

[NEC Care - Diabetic Eye Screening \(necsws.com\)](http://necsws.com)

[Live Well Swindon | Swindon Borough Council](#)

[Diabetes Prevention | Xyla Health & Wellbeing \(xylahealthandwellbeing.com\)](http://xylahealthandwellbeing.com)

[Swindon Talking Therapies :: Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust \(awp.nhs.uk\)](http://awp.nhs.uk)

[Diabetes UK - Know diabetes. Fight diabetes. | Diabetes UK](#)

[Welcome to Wiltshire Sight \(sightsupportwest.org.uk\)](http://sightsupportwest.org.uk)



healthwatch
Swindon

Healthwatch Swindon
Sanford House
Sanford Street
Swindon
SN1 1HE

www.healthwatchswindon.org.uk

t: 01793 497 777

e: info@healthwatchswindon.org.uk

✕ [@HealthwatchSwin](https://twitter.com/HealthwatchSwin)

f [Facebook.com/HealthwatchSwindon](https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchSwindon)