



Press Release  
08 October 2007

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## **DIABETES AWARENESS DAY IN OMAGH**

The Western Health and Social Care Trust Diabetes Specialist Team will be out in the community on Thursday 11 October to raise awareness of the condition and help people to recognise its warning signs. Members of the team will staff an information display at Dunnes Stores in Omagh from 11am to 4pm, and everyone is welcome to attend.

Diabetes is one of the fastest-growing health problems in Northern Ireland, and has been described as a global pandemic. More than 55,000 people in Northern Ireland have been diagnosed with diabetes. Worryingly, more than 25,000 people here have diabetes, but are not aware of it. Untreated, diabetes can lead to many serious and life-threatening conditions. It is the leading cause of blindness, kidney failure and lower limb amputation. It increases the risk of heart disease five-fold, and triples the risk of a stroke.

Common symptoms of diabetes are passing urine frequently, getting up at night to go to the toilet, unexplained tiredness, excessive thirst, and weight loss. Factors that may contribute to getting diabetes include a family history of diabetes, lack of exercise a poor diet and being overweight.

Breid McGirr, Diabetes Specialist Nurse with the Western Health and Social Care Trust, said: "We hope that anyone with any concerns will call in and chat with us. More importantly, anyone who believes they have any of the symptoms of diabetes should make an appointment to see their doctor immediately. Early diagnosis is very important. Diabetes can be managed with healthy lifestyle including diet and exercise, and medication if required."

The Western Trust's Diabetes Specialist Team, to include nurses, a dietician and a podiatrist will be available to give advice and answer any questions.

Local pharmacists, opticians and a representative from Diabetes UK will also be on hand to give advice. If however, you are unable to attend, please contact your GP, pharmacist, or practise nurse for information on Diabetes.

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