

PRESS RELEASE

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Diabetes course made free in response to coronavirus

Every person with type 2 diabetes in the UK can access an NHS-developed online education course to help them manage their condition during the coronavirus outbreak.

In an unprecedented move, the digital version of DESMOND – a gold standard type 2 diabetes structured education programme – has now been made available for **free** across the country to ensure people have reliable information to help them self-manage while the country has strict curbs on daily life.

Developed by the Leicester Diabetes Centre it is only normally available to those whose local area has commissioned DESMOND.

DESMOND is proven to lower HbA1c, a measurement of blood glucose levels over a two to three-month period. The programme is evidence-based and has been developed on the back of years of research by the Leicester Diabetes Centre.

The Leicester Diabetes Centre is an international centre of excellence in diabetes research, education and innovation. It is led by Co-Directors Professor Melanie Davies CBE and Professor Kamlesh Khunti.

Professor Davies, Professor of Diabetes Medicine at the University of Leicester, said: “As the country enters a national lockdown, people with type 2 diabetes are now, more than ever, having to manage their condition with less face-to-face support. We have made MyDesmond available for free to everyone with the condition in the UK because we want to make sure people have access to high-quality information at this unprecedented time.”

Professor Khunti, Professor of Primary Care Diabetes and Vascular Medicine at the University of Leicester, added: “The programme has been founded on the NICE-approved face-to-face DESMOND self-management programme. This means you are getting the same quality of programme but delivered at a pace and adjusted to suit your needs. It includes short videos, articles and interactive activities on diet and exercise you can view as quickly, or as slowly as you like.”

MyDesmond is based on the award-winning DESMOND self-management diabetes education programme. It brings all the content and research evidence from the face-to-face programme onto a portable interactive web-based platform for you to discover on a mobile device.

It features all the diabetes-related content as well as booster sessions allowing users to interact with the programme on an on-going basis. There is also an opportunity to ask an expert, while people can also track their activity levels and link up to the Fitbit, Google Fit or

Garmin. Weight, blood pressure, HbA1c, diet and cholesterol can also be followed, with an ability to set daily.

This programme gives people with type 2 diabetes the chance to connect and support each other via the chat forum with members of the DESMOND community.

To sign up for MyDesmond, email myDESMOND@uhl-tr.nhs.uk with your name, preferred email address, the county you live in/your postcode and NHS number (if you have this to hand).

In addition to making MyDesmond freely accessible, the Leicester Diabetes Centre has also launched a page entirely dedicated to the coronavirus on its website. It covers symptoms, advice about hospital and GP appointments, emotional wellbeing and mental health.

The Leicester Diabetes Centre is working hard to keep the website updated, providing general information and support to people living with diabetes and healthcare professionals at this challenging time. To visit the dedicated page, [click here](#).