

MAKE A CHANGE BE THE DIFFERENCE.

OWN LIFE

A Chester grandfather lost a stone in weight after a diabetes awareness session inspired him to get to grips with his diet. Donald Wilson cut out his favourite sugary snacks and started going to the gym three times a week after attending a free Diabetes Essentials course in April 2016.

The 68-year-old's friends and family have been left stunned by his transformation, with his renewed fitness enabling him to walk 75 miles of the South West Coast Path.

"My sister saw me for the first time in six months and said 'gosh you've lost weight'. I've come down about four notches on my belt," the retired airport duty manager said. "It was a bit of a novelty at first - then the challenge kicked in."

Donald was put forward for Diabetes Essentials by his GP after blood tests showed he had pre-diabetes, a borderline category for people whose results are high but not high enough for a Type 2 diabetes diagnosis.

Dietitians from the Countess of Chester Hospital (pictured right) host regular borderline Diabetes Essentials sessions in the community to offer advice and information about healthier lifestyles.

"Before I'd think nothing of eating a couple of doughnuts on the way home and I'm a glutton for Danish pastries, but I haven't had one since so it's been a big learning curve," Donald said. "It was inspirational, it really was. It put me on the right track."

Anyone interested in attending one of the sessions can get in touch with the team to request a place via the Diabetes Essentials Facebook page.

There are bespoke sessions for borderline, Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes at Beehive Healthcare on Northgate Avenue and at Ellesmere Port Hospital.

Since 2014 more than 4,000 people have attended a Diabetes Essentials course and transformations like Donald's make it all worthwhile.



"It's fantastic to hear how much of a difference our session made to Donald," said dietitian Ellen Mitchell. "We encourage people to set small targets for sustained improvement. Donald really is an inspiration for others to follow."

Interested in attending one of the sessions? Call **01244 365 234** or email: diabetes.essentials@nhs.net