

We are deeply saddened to learn of the death of Isobel Murray, on 22 May 2021 at her home in Ayr. Isobel was a caring wife to Jim, mother and grandmother, and had retired from a career as a manager in the civil service.

Isobel was the first person in Scotland to volunteer to join the ground-breaking Diabetes Remission Clinical Trial (DiRECT), funded by Diabetes UK and run jointly from the Universities of Glasgow and Newcastle.

Isobel had been unwell in the years prior to starting the DiRECT trial, almost seven years ago, having previously had heart attacks and being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in 2011. She was highly motivated to regain her health, and with the DiRECT diet programme she lost over 4 stones (25kg) in weight. With that, her diabetes went into remission – no longer requiring medication. Isobel declared *“I have got my life back”*.

Her story inspired others seeking a route back from type 2 diabetes, and Isobel became a keen supporter of efforts at a national level to make type 2 diabetes remission programmes accessible to more people. She appeared regularly at Diabetes UK professional and public events, and on television and radio. She became the ‘public face’ of the DiRECT trial and of diabetes remission.

She was a kind, thoughtful and positive person and provided hope to huge numbers of people with type 2 diabetes, and their families. Her beaming smile was the cover photo for the Winter 2020 edition of Diabetes UK Update magazine, which featured her in a 3-page ‘Cover Story’ article about DiRECT.

Her own words speak volumes:

“When I was first told that my diabetes went into remission, I felt absolutely ecstatic! Six years later, that feeling is still with me. Over the last few years I have been able to lead a normal life again.”

“It took only a few months to do the plan and to get my life back – it was worth every minute. I feel 10 years younger now, and I will do everything in my power to never go back to how things were before.”

All of us in the DiRECT research team, and at Diabetes UK, are indebted to Isobel for participating in DiRECT, and for everything she did to promote successful type 2 diabetes remission programmes. We are all grateful to have spent time in her company over the course of the study and beyond.

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UPDATE

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