



Leicester
City Council



Leicester City

News release

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For immediate release

First round healthy heart winners announced

Winners of the Leicester City Healthy Heart campaign have been announced and prizes are to be awarded over the next week.

NHS Leicester City in partnership with Leicester City Council launched the campaign back in June to get city residents on their feet and walking towards a healthier heart. During the first round people were asked to log the minutes they had walked over a five week period.

The winning prize goes to Sofya Valieva, 32, from West End, Leicester who logged an impressive 113 hours and 40 minutes of walking to date in total. This equates to a staggering 6,820 minutes of activity.

Sofya, who plans to continue increasing the length of her walks, said: "I am thrilled to have won the first round. My father had a heart scare in the spring and I know that our diets are not as healthy as they could be so it was time to change. I found a leaflet at the West End Neighbourhood Centre and visited the website to sign up.

"I liked the idea of recording the minutes I had walked, it was simple and motivational. Keeping records allows me to see how much activity I am doing and improving on it. During my walks I explored the banks of the River Soar. Leicester is so attractive for walking. I plan to increase my distance along the river in future."

The local NHS and city council will present Sofya with a bike as her chosen prize for winning the first round challenge.

In Leicester there are around 17,959 people with diabetes, 10,107 with coronary heart disease and 4,254 people on the stroke register. Walking can be done anywhere and at any time, it's free and participants don't need any special equipment. Walking can be done at any pace and it's a great way to socialise and meet new people whilst reducing the chance of a heart attack or stroke.

The team prize went to 'Footloose and Fancy Free' who walked for 185 hours and 20 minutes. The team, made up of seven people from various organisations across the city, take regular walks together after work and at the weekends to clock up their minutes.

A spokesperson from the group, said: "We are delighted with the win. We're a fairly active bunch as it is, but doing activity together is better. You can chat along the way and keep each other going if someone in the team gets tired.

"We tend to walk around our neighbourhoods but have also been to Bradgate Park, Abbey Park and Foxton Locks which offers some lovely scenery."

The team will be awarded sports vouchers for a retailer of their choice.

Deb Watson, director of public health for NHS Leicester City and Leicester City Council, said: "Congratulations to the winners. It has been really encouraging to see how many people have backed the campaign so far. We currently recommend that adults take part in 30 minutes of activity per day, such as brisk walking to improve their heart health.

"Brisk walking means walking so that you breathe a little faster, feel warmer and have a slightly faster heart beat. You should still be able to talk. If you can't continue a conversation you're going too fast.

"We want people to know it's not too late to join up. The second phase is currently taking place until Friday August 5, so there is plenty of time for people to get on their feet and start logging those vital minutes."

NHS Leicester City and Leicester City Council are introducing more incentives in the next phase to get even more people walking towards a healthier lifestyle. A £50 voucher for a sports retailer will be awarded to an individual who has walked between 90 and 210 minutes per week. Names will be put into a hat and one winner will be drawn. There will also be £25 voucher for a sports retailer given to one winner who logs up to 90 minutes per week.

For more information on the campaign log onto www.leicestershealtyheart.co.uk or to get ideas on where to walk this summer visit www.leicester.gov.uk/parks.

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This press release was issued by Liz Thomas at NHS Leicester City. For more information, contact the communications office on 0116 295 4123.

Notes to editors:

NHS Leicester City is the operating name for Leicester City Primary Care Trust.