

Spotlight on diabetes

Inaugural North West Run for the Cure all about raising awareness

by Shawn Gillick
Northern News Services

Matthew Clark hopes people will come running – and walking – to the inaugural North West Run for the Cure on May 18.

The run is sponsored and organized by the North West Company, the parent corporation of Northmart, but the event also has special meaning to Clark.

"I'm diabetic myself," said Clark, who is also manager of Northmart, on May 2. "So it's something that's front and centre for me. The opportunity is there to give back. Diabetes, as you know, is an ongoing concern in the country and certainly in the North where the prevalence is getting more and more."

The North West Company has traditionally run a fall

campaign called Gift to Hope, Clark said, to raise money for the Canadian Diabetes Foundation for research and patient care.

The Run for the Cure is an adjunct to that campaign, but with a twist of considerable value to local communities. The company will reinvest some of that money into local programs and awareness.

"We've been planning this for a couple of months now. As a business, we always choose a couple of key charities that we support," Clark said. "The Canadian Diabetes Association is one of those. Over the last 10 years we raised \$2.5 million in partnership with them."

"The idea is to take some of those funds and use it to build awareness in the community," he said. "We've reached out to

the diabetes educator here in Inuvik. We're not focused on the idea of running and competing and winning with this run," Clark said. "It's more of an awareness event."

Times will be kept for anyone interested, but "it won't be a celebration of 'Oh wow, you did that in so many minutes,'" he said. "The thing that really separates this event for us is that we're not telling people to go out and raise money, we're not asking people to pledge money – we're just asking ... We want it to be a community event where no one's asked to raise money. It's all about diabetes and education."

Participants, if willing, will have their blood sugar level tested before and after they take part. An emphasis will also be placed on how to achieve better eating habits



The Northmart team that's been organizing a walk and run for diabetes education to be held May 18 includes Inuvik Northmart manager Matthew Clark, back row left, Jessica Hicks, Jeff Piche, David Proulx, a general merchandise manager from Winnipeg, and, front row left, Michelle Payne and Jodi MacLaren.

and lifestyles.

"It's really about having a chance to educate and talk about the issues," he said.

The length of the course will vary from one kilometre for kids up to 10 kilometres for adults. Both are open to both walkers and runners. Everyone will receive a T-shirt and a medal for participating.

The route is still being confirmed, but will likely start around the legion on Veteran's Way and snake through town

up to Marine Bypass Road via Navy Road. That's along the general route used for other events, such as the Terry Fox Run and the Midnight Sun Fun Run.

Clark said he's been working with Rose Constantineau from the town's recreation department to plan the route and make the arrangements.

Sarah Guy, North West Company manager of community support and corporate events, said the "North West

Run for Diabetes is a fantastic community event that we are proud to bring to Inuvik.

"It is an excellent opportunity for the community to participate in a free community event, get active and create awareness about diabetes. As well it is one of the ways North West and CDA (Canadian Diabetes Association) are saying 'thank you' to the community members for their ongoing support for the fight against diabetes."

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