

Press Release



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Orchid and IBM support Sri Lankan diabetes project

An East Midlands IT company has joined forces with one of the biggest names in the computer world to help people with diabetes in one of Southern Asia's poorest countries.

Although it is usually associated with sugary Western diets, Sri Lanka has the world's highest rates of diabetes prompting a major international effort to improve care for sufferers and raise awareness of the dangers of a sugar rich diet.

The Sri Lankan Diabetes Education Project already has the support of consultants at The John Pease Diabetes Centre at Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust, but now UK business, including Derby-based Orchid (UK) Limited, have joined the fight against the sometimes debilitating and often life-threatening condition.

Thanks to its close working relationship with IBM, Orchid has secured the donation of two computer servers from the global computer giant and undertaken the task of configuring them for use as part of the project.

Orchid has also helped to prepare old computers donated to the project by other UK companies including Ashfords Solicitors. These computers are now in use at three education and training labs in Sri Lanka and are linked directly to The John Pease Diabetic Centre at Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottingham.

There consultants Dr Devaka Fernando, who is from Sri Lanka and Dr George Thomson are closely involved in developing the project alongside the Sri Lankan Endocrine and Metabolic Diseases Trust and the World Diabetes Foundation.

On his company's involvement in the project, Paul Hayes, Health Care Account Manager at Orchid UK, commented: "We work very closely with IBM and when we heard about this project we thought that one of our biggest and most important partners would like to join us in helping them out.

"In the end they supplied the equipment free of charge whilst our specialists at Orchid provided the expertise to configure the servers properly.

"We are delighted to play a part in such an important and worthwhile project.

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“Sri Lanka has suffered a lot in recent years, not least from the effects of the Tsunami on Boxing Day 2004, but at least these efforts will go some way towards improving the lives of many people there and contribute to the long-term health care improvements in the country.”

Charlie Sutton of IBM said: “We are always keen to work with our ‘Silver’ partners such as Orchid and especially on such a worthwhile project as this.”

Helping to install the equipment on the ground in Sri Lanka is healthcare IT consultant Julian Scott, himself a diabetes sufferer. Through his company Panacea-global he has provided ongoing support for the project and he is appealing for help from other firms in the East Midlands.

Julian explained: “We have now installed the computers but we desperately need audio-visual equipment. If anyone can help we would be delighted to hear from them and any support would be gratefully received.

“Both my wife and I are type one diabetes sufferers and insulin dependent, so we know better than most what an awful effect the disease can have on everyday life and that prevention is better than cure!

“Type two diabetes can be tackled by changes in diet and taking exercise – an important message throughout the world but critical in poorer countries such as Sri Lanka.”

Anyone who can help provide audio-visual equipment for the project can contact Julian at Panacea-global on 07977 258521 or email panaceaglobal@ntlworld.com.

ENDS

Caption:

Pictured here at The John Pease Diabetes Centre at Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust, viewing the Sri Lanka Diabetes project online, are consultant Dr George Thomson (left) and Paul Hayes, Health Care Account Manager at Orchid UK.

Notes to Editor:

Written and distributed by Moorlands Media on behalf of Orchid UK. For further information, contact Martin Farrow at Moorlands Media on 07771 970025 or Scott Lea at Orchid UK on 01332 36 00 99 or email slea@orchiduk.com.

- Orchid UK was founded in 1996 by its current MD Brett Critchley.
- The company employs 36 people at its headquarters in Newmarket Court, Ascot Drive Derby.
- Orchid UK specialises in sales, installation and support of computers, servers, networks and cabling for clients across the UK.
- Customers include schools, hospitals and businesses of all sizes.