I: **So thanks again for participating in the interview. So as a first starting question, what made you think it would be useful to take part in the interview today?**

R: Well I thought the platform was actually very helpful, not least of which being it’s just a very, very convenient way of collecting recipes together without having to do lots of cut and paste or other alternatives, so I found that it was a very good idea and very convenient.

I: **Okay, brill. So you’re actually saying the way you were involved in the platform was mainly by collecting the recipes?**

R: Yes, there were some bits, little bits here and there, and I can’t be specific, I can’t remember, that I’d already started incorporating. Although I’m actually quite a good cook, my husband actually prefers to do the cooking, so he will be presented with it at some point.

I: **That’s gonna be interesting.**

R: Yeah.

I: **Yeah. So did you overall enjoy using the platform, I’m not sure, can you remember how often you used it for recipes or something else?**

R: There’s no sort of pattern to it really. Very often I mean I have email stuff through from Diabetes UK and they usually feature some recipes in that, and I’ve saved quite a lot of those, although I have got to other sites, such as BBC Good Food, places like that, where I’ve been able to use it as well.

I: **Yeah, so actually I think, yeah, you’re right, you’re referring also to what we used, the Diabetes Friendly Community, so that was exactly, that there were some recipes used from Diabetes UK but also you can import your own recipes of course if you want on the app, and, yeah, I hear a lot of times people use the BBC Good Food recipes as well.**

**So was there, apart from the recipes, and I can guide you a bit through that, were there specific elements in the platform you enjoyed the most? So, for example, there was the recipe bars in the Diabetes Friendly Meal Community which you can save or share, but also you had a shopping list and also a meal planner so you can actually plan your meals for a week ahead and you can actually shop for those items for the specific recipes you plan to eat that week.**

**So the meal planner and the shopping list, have you actually touched upon it at all or seen it in the app or were you not aware of this?**

R: I’ve seen it, I haven’t implemented it yet, but it certainly looked to me as though it would be very, very useful.

I: **And what would make it specifically useful in your circumstances do you think?**

R: I think in terms of planning ahead so that I know that we’ve got a meal that serves a particular purpose, and also I mean at the moment I’m still shielding, so having a specific shopping list will make it easier because we’re dependent on Tesco delivery at the moment.

I: **Definitely, yeah, because I think in the app you have different supermarkets related to this, I think Asda and Tesco are the big ones currently.**

R: Yeah, and I know Tesco is a big supporter of Diabetes UK.

I: **Yeah, that’s correct, that’s what one of my Diabetes UK colleagues mentioned as well. Okay, so there is, I mean specifically because you’re part of a vulnerable group, I understand that you have to shield during COVID as well, it would actually help you or have the potential to help you in your shopping through Tesco also by using that app?**

R: Yes.

I: **Okay. And can you tell me what do you think is the reason why you’ve not used it yet, was it not clear for you how to use it, or you’ve just not got your head around it yet?**

R: Well it’s partly circumstances in terms of making fairly significant changes to the way that I’m approaching that. I mean I’ve always been in a very healthy way, but I’m actually concentrating and focusing on bringing carb content down as much as possible, that’s not with the intention of, cos I’m type 2, of possible remission because doctors and the diabetes team seem to be fairly confident that I’m not in the group that is related to lifestyle [00:06:00 inaudible] everybody in my family on both sides are diabetic, so I always knew that it was gonna arrive at some point and I had a pretty good chance, but in fact I’ve been able to manage it much better than the rest of my family, well the rest of my family’s not here anymore, I’m the only one left now, but I’ve managed to control it a lot better than many of them were able to.

I: **Okay, well that’s good because it feels like you have it under control, and I think you mentioned you’re switching to a different diet as well with trying to lower the carbs aspects. So were there any things, any elements in the platform that you didn’t really like about it, was there anything that was unclear or you didn’t feel like using it a lot?**

R: I don’t think so actually, I think I was, just generally speaking I was very impressed with it as an application.

I: **Okay, that’s good.**

R: And I can imagine particularly, I mean I’ve been diagnosed for well over a decade, but I remember when I was first diagnosed, even though I lived around it with many in my family, it’s quite different when you’re actually having to make those adjustments yourself, so I would have been enormously grateful for something like this platform at that time, I think for people who are coming to it new that would be a really big bonus.

I: **Okay, so you think it has been useful for you in terms of the recipes, but mainly it would have a lot of potential for people who maybe have just been recently diagnosed with diabetes?**

R: I think so, and I mean I think it would help to relieve quite a lot of anxiety because many people do experience quite high levels of anxiety, obviously they’re trying to get their head around it.

I: **Yes, I can imagine like a diagnosis in that spectrum is also, yeah, quite overwhelming and I guess you can’t always see the consequences in terms of your physical exercise and diet and all the lifestyle changes if that’s applicable. So, okay, that’s an interesting suggestion, I must admit I’ve heard it from one or two people before so it’s quite interesting to see, or to hear your perspective on that. And in general, do you have a perspective or a feeling about how easy or difficult it was to use the platform for you?**

R: **Well I found it enormously easy, I mean I just found a recipe I was interested in, clicked on the platform icon and all the rest of it just went through.**

I: Yeah, so you saved it from external websites as well which is great, yeah. Did you use a lot of recipes from that specific community, so the Diabetes Friendly Meals Community?

R: Well it was quite a bit, and there are some, I mean there are quite a lot of diabetes forums, most of them it is just sharing of experiences, and if I need something which I need to have information about and know is reliable and verifiable, I always go to Diabetes UK, but there is another one, and it’s diabetes.co.uk and they often will have recipes on there, they also, and it’s a combination of a forum and a business I think because they are promoting low carb diets very strongly and they have their own publication for that, but excerpts from those publications are often on the forum and so if I spot one that looks like I might like it I can grab it off there.

I: **Great, great. And in terms of the recipes just to, I know you’ve said you find it quite easy to use which is great because it needs to be user friendly and accessible for everyone, so in terms of the recipes, I know in the recipes from the Diabetes Friendly Meal Community there is a lot of information around nutrition value, there’s a health score I think from one to ten, and also a glycaemic index is presented, is there anything of those values or components that you were specifically interested in, I can imagine the carbs you were mentioning that already, is there anything else you were paying attention to?**

R: Basically it’s carbs and calories.

I: **Okay, so the overall calories, yeah, per serving I think, yeah, they are displayed for sure. And did you look into the health score at all with the traffic light system, the red, the amber and the green, or was that not something you were interested in?**

R: No, it’s not something I used.

I: **Okay, well that’s very clear, thank you.**

R: Again I think the reason primarily for not is because I’ve lived with it for quite a long time, so a lot of that information is already in my head, but again going back to people who are newly diagnosed and I’d say in that, really thinking in terms of it from diagnosis and the first twelve months are the time when people feel that they’re under pressure, and so that system I feel probably again would be very helpful for people in that situation.

I: **Yeah, I mean in that sense you sound quite experienced and knowledgeable about your own condition if I may word it like that, and that’s actually quite useful to have your perspective on it in terms for whom would the platform be useful and in what way would it be useful for people, and I wasn’t actually aware of also the anxiety side of things when people get the diagnosis, so it’s actually quite helpful to have your insight, and how it’s useful for you while you’re managing your diabetes quite well you said, so yeah, that’s great, thank you.**

R: It may be worth saying that it’s a little bit of a postcode lottery I think, I mean where I live, so it’s a small village in [anonymized], on the edge of [anonymized], and our medical centre is very good but they I think probably don’t have to deal with quite as many as might well do in an urban situation, and I’ve read many accounts from people living in cities and much more densely populated areas where they’re given the diagnosis but they’re not actually given any additional help after that in terms of ways to deal with it, which is where Diabetes UK comes in particularly helpful for some people in that situation, so putting the two things together I think is quite a major step forward actually.

I: **Oh, that’s great feedback where, yeah, we’re working together with Diabetes UK on this project so we hope eventually they will adopt the platform as well as part of their approach, but yeah, we have to see if there needs to be more improvements, maybe what you’re referring to for people who are just diagnosed or have different kind of elements to it for different stages of the condition, so yeah, it’s actually quite helpful to get your insights on that as well.**

R: How did the project come to be?

I: **I think it’s because they noticed, I think the Diabetes UK partners I think they had a lot of recipes on their websites and they actually noticed that the shopping tool and the meal planner were quite useful, so I think they were just wondering if there was potential for them to use the platform on their website and have it in an enclosed environment for them to distribute to people, to advertise for people to use it as a tool to manage their condition on top of their existing learning environment and all the other recipes and everything they have.**

R: Yes, I mean that seems perfect, I’ve just been very impressed by it.

I: **That’s great feedback, thank you, and I think you were mentioning for you it was quite easy to use as well. Was there anything in the app or what you’ve seen that was more challenging to use or difficult?**

R: No, I don’t think so, I mean I’m retired now, but I worked in education and particularly with IT right from when PC’s first came on the scene, so I’m very tech savvy with those sorts of things, but I think a lot of people would still be able to, it’s quite intuitive but I don’t think even people who weren’t particularly tech savvy would have too much difficulty in using it.

I: **Okay, that’s interesting because that actually goes to my next question a bit because you’re indicating the app would probably be user friendly for a lot of people, for a wide spectrum of people, but do you think the platform attracts and is user friendly for people with diabetes with different backgrounds, so from different age groups so younger and older people, but also for minority groups in terms of their ethnicity, and something you already mentioned about digital literacy so how well do you cope with your mobile phone and apps and maybe the laptop or the tablet, do you have any additional thoughts about that?**

R: No, other than, and I can’t speak very much to issues around ethnicity with it other than particular recipes, but I do, where I live I have a group of, well they’re all elderly ladies actually …

I: **Lucky man**.

R: … [00:18:07 inaudible] who use PC’s but of course it’s something that they haven’t grown up with, and they often experience difficulties with that, so I maintain them for them and I have remote access from home so that I can sort some issues out for them that way.

I: **Wow.**

R: So I have got some idea about how people in that group, the difficulties that they find with using digital stuff. Now by and large I would have said that I don’t think many of them would actually have had too much difficulty, I think it’s …

I: **Okay, oh that’s good.**

R: … it’s designed in a way which with just very few prompts be able to negotiate.

I: **Oh that’s good feedback, so you think it would be accessible for different groups of people because it’s just user friendly and intuitive?**

R: I think so, yes. I mean I think it succeeded very well on that front.

I: **Oh that’s great, thank you, because I think that’s also one of our aims to be as inclusive as possible because also there is a bit of a higher prevalence, if it’s related to lifestyle, that in the ethnic minority groups type 2 diabetes is more prevalent, so we actually want to make sure that they’re included as well, and actually with the research we’re currently doing we’ve seen quite a select group so there are not a lot of ethnic minorities involved, so we were just wondering how we can reach them and make sure they’re involved, cos also hopefully they can actually use the platform and they’re actually satisfied with it and happy with it.**

**But yeah, that might be something we need to do more follow up research into because they seem to be quite difficult to get engaged and be on board with with the research project so yeah, but it’s really, really good to hear your thoughts on it, and you have direct experience with a lovely club of ladies who, yeah, who you are helping out with actually the computer side of things and the technology side of things, but yeah, you would expect that they would be able to use this, so that’s good, I think that’s good input.**

R: Yeah. The one thing that occurs to me initially, and I haven’t necessarily got a lot to base this on, is that some ethnic groups with some of the recipes which are available aren’t necessarily directed at certain community groups, and the fact that you can go to another site and choose it I would think would be something which could be encouraged, and I think it’s like with many things you don’t use it unless you’ve got a need to …

I: **Yeah, that’s true.**

R: … so if people within those communities were particularly aware that they could go to pretty much any site that had the kind of meals that you might be looking for, and use the platform to gain all that information, I would’ve thought would be quite a positive route to follow.

I: **Yeah, definitely, and I think on top of saving the recipes in one place, and also get a bit more, you know, the nutrition value and the health score maybe they find that useful as well if they have recently been diagnosed. Yeah, so I think it’s a good suggestion actually to put a bit more awareness around that option of importing from external websites, so not necessarily using the recipes that are posted by Diabetes UK but also by other users on the Diabetes Friendly Meal Community, so yeah, that could be a good way actually to engage different communities a bit better.**

R: Yeah, and I think it would add to the diversity of it certainly.

I: **Yeah, an interesting thought, thank you so much Steve. So, yeah, I have some questions around lifestyle changes, but they might not all be applicable to you.**

R: Okay.

I: **Did the platform support you in planning meals more efficiently?**

R: I think it will do.

I: **Okay, how do you think it would help?**

R: Well I suppose you’re able to call up a menu and a planner and you’ve got a shopping list as well, it’s just all aimed towards making the whole process more straightforward.

I: **Yeah. So do you think that it definitely has potential?**

R: Oh, yes, certainly, one of the things that’s crossed my mind a couple of times when I was doing it was I was hoping that this wasn’t going to be just a research thing, I was hoping it was gonna stay.

I: **Yeah, it’s openly accessible so even when we finish up the research you can still, yeah, you can still use it because it’s from. So I think the platform is originally like a UK based company but they are collaborating with another company to get it, you know, deploy it to a bigger audience and worldwide kind of thing.**

**But yeah, I think we just have to sit around the table with Diabetes UK what actually their wish list is, and if with all your input and from other participants we can actually summarise the most important recommendations to them to adopt this app in their infrastructure on the Diabetes UK website.**

**So yeah, I think, yeah that would be really useful actually to include more participants and to do more research, but that doesn’t mean that you can’t use it anymore, it’s just openly available. I’m using it as well so I think it’s great for the recipes, I agree with you, I don’t think for me it was more the planning or the shopping list bit, but it was more the recipes and collecting it in one place and see how the instructions work and how the nutrition value is, so yeah, it has a really broad application and reach I think.**

**So did the platform support you in making healthy food choices, I guess more in terms for you with the calorie count and the carb included in the recipe?**

R: Those are the two things that are most important to me at the moment, but in terms of the nutritional value of particular foods that is something which I already possess a significant degree of knowledge about those.

I: **Yeah, I think that’s referring back to my remark I think you’re quite knowledgeable and experienced in that sense that you know how to manage the diabetes side of things as well in terms of your food and your healthy meals.**

R: But having said that I have spoken at various times with friends who are not diabetic and occasionally things will come up in conversation about nutritional values of things, and I’ve been really surprised cos these are people who are quite well educated but actually really didn’t have very much knowledge about the nutrition of what they were eating, and I was quite surprised by that, I just kind of, well I don’t know, I suppose cos I was in my own bubble really, because I did I kind of thought that a lot of other people would, but that seems not to be the case.

I: **So it’s also a bit of more awareness around healthy foods and a healthy diet I guess?**

R: I think so, and I mean I suspect that during the pandemic a lot of people have actually changed in that area where they’ve been looking at what they’re getting and what they’re doing.

I: **Yes, that is actually related to my other questions. Sorry, was that the bell ringing or was there?**

R: No, it was just something coming through on my PC.

I: **Okay, sorry, I thought maybe we have to pause it for a bit.**

R: That’s okay.

I: **So, yeah, I think I will come to that a bit later. So in terms of diabetes management, do you think the platform supported you in diabetes management in terms of your weight and waist size, your blood glucose level or blood pressure or cholesterol level?**

R: I think all of those things actually.

I: **Yeah?**

R: Yes.

I: **That’s good. And did it support you in your food shopping experience, I mean I know you already mentioned that you’re shielding at the moment so I guess shopping in a shop is not there, but maybe around a shopping list, do you have any thoughts about that?**

R: It’s just very convenient, and it does make it very much easier, but I think really it’s around convenience.

I: **Yeah.**

R: But I suppose particularly so at the moment, it would be quite interesting to see how I end up using it once we are finally through this pandemic.

I: **Yeah, I mean you are able if you pick certain recipes, yeah, you are able to put those ingredients in your shopping list and go through the Tesco website and order it in that way, it’s all related, and I even spoke to one of the other participants, as an example she told me that she could share her shopping list with a family member who was able to go out shopping for them so they didn’t have to go out and be exposed to risks in terms of the COVID pandemic, so that might be two ways where you would be exploring opportunities to use it for you.**

R: Yes, and I hadn’t thought of that.

I: **Yeah, I thought I’d mention it because I mean you sound quite interested in it but you’ve not used it so far so I thought I’d mention those two options so you can have a think after the chat we have and maybe you’re gonna use it, maybe not, that’s also fine, it has to suit your needs and your convenience really.**

R: Which I think it does.

I: **Yeah, that’s great. And did you learn anything from the platform?**

R: … I don’t think there was anything that I didn’t already know. I’m just trying to think back. I don’t think so, I think all the various things I was already aware of in one way or another.

I: **Yeah. And would you change anything about the platform, I know we mentioned or you mentioned the feature of importing recipes from external websites and saving them in your app, that could be a bit more encouraged and people be made aware of, is there anything else you would change about the platform?**

R: … I don’t think so.

I: **So in terms of how we can improve it, any suggestions you might have or you can think of?**

R: I think if I had actually been using it more extensively I might be able to answer that, but I don’t think I’ve had enough experience of actually using it to be able to comment on that.

I: **That’s okay, it’s just, yeah, maybe you grasped some of the elements you’ve seen on the app, but I agree with you, it depends on how often you’ve used it or are using it, and if you covered all the elements and the full potential of the app, so I think that’s a very honest answer as well. Would you recommend the platform to other people with diabetes?**

R: Oh yes, yeah, definitely.

I: **And I think you were mentioning it would be specifically valuable for people who are recently diagnosed with diabetes, but you’re saying I would recommend it to anyone really with diabetes?**

R: Well yes, yes, I would.

I: **Yeah, that’s great.**

R: Would you excuse me just one moment cos I’m running out of saliva, I must get a drink.

I: **Yeah, that’s fine.**

R: … Hello, I’m back.

I: **Hi. That’s okay. So, yeah, we only have a couple of questions left really so we’re almost at the end of the interview. So we already, I mean your question was, yeah, how would Diabetes UK be interested in this and how the charity related to the project, but do you think the platform will be a valuable addition to the Diabetes UK ecosystem or website or learning zone?**

R: Yeah, very much so.

I: **In what way would you think it would be valuable?**

R: Well I think, well potentially in two areas, we’re going back to people who are newly diagnosed, I think a lot of people have uncertainty about whether a particular meal or particular contents of meals are suited to their condition or not, because I think that one of the biggest things that I’m aware of amongst people coming to that new or indeed people who aren’t diabetic and which illustrates it, is that there’s a very large number of people who don’t actually realise that carbs are in so many things, and I think when you’re newly diagnosed that particular bit is quite a steep learning curve because you start to discover that they’re in all sorts of everything that you would not have even considered, but by being able to use it in that way you could become confident that the content was suited to what you needed.

I: **Yeah, okay, I think that’s a very clear answer. And are you aware of any similar applications for people with diabetes, compared to the platform, is there anything similar out there?**

R: Not that I’ve come across.

I: **Okay. So it would be quite, I mean the platform is quite unique in that sense?**

R: Well it seems like that to me. I mean there are some general recipe sites, and not diabetes ones, but just ordinary ones that sometimes have the ability to, you know, it will give you a shopping list, and I suppose you can download the recipe but they’re separate operations, but I personally have never come across anything that is as convenient or appropriate for the diabetic community.

I: **Okay, well that’s quite good because that will mean that it’s quite a unique platform and tool, so a lot of people hopefully can benefit from that. And I think one of the last questions is more I think around the COVID pandemic as well. How do you think COVID-19 affected the usage of the platform among people with diabetes?**

R: I’ve got no way of telling. I mean I can speculate …

I: **Please do.**

R: … that they might in the same way as I am in that if they’re having stuff brought in by delivery or as you were saying by a family member or friend, it would be very useful. I would be interested to know, I guess the platform must have some kind of stats about their usage?

I: **Yeah, I mean I think in general when I spoke to a colleague, I think he was based in Germany, but he said yeah, we’ve definitely seen a spike in usage of the platform when people were mainly at home I guess during lockdown, yeah, making more time to cook a meal and, you know, what you’re doing, use the recipes, so yeah, I guess your speculation in that sense is in the right direction.**

R: Yeah.

I: **But, yeah, I guess it’s also what you’re saying for your own circumstances when you’re shielding, it is practical to rely on online shopping and order everything online, it gets delivered, it’s so convenient. So, yeah, do you have anything else you would like to say or add before we end our interview?**

R: No, I don’t think so, other than that I personally think it’s a fantastic idea.

I: **Yeah. Yeah, that’s great, I mean it was really useful to have a chat with you, especially because I think, yeah, what you’re saying, you’ve been diagnosed for quite a long time so you know what’s out there and how you can use different tools to help you, well with your diet, so I think yeah, it was really, really helpful to have your perspective on it.**

R: It was far and away the best aid that I’ve seen since I was diagnosed.

I: **Okay. Well it offers a lot of potential and hopefully also some follow up for the project with Diabetes UK and hopefully we can learn better their environment as well, but yeah, the plan is to summarise all your feedback and from the other participants in a final report and try to distribute a summary of that to you all. So the project is ending I think in June, the end of June, so it will still take a while, but hopefully we will be able to share that with you.**

R: That was gonna be my next question, if we would possibly be able to have a copy of what comes out of it.

I: **Yeah, of course, I mean, yeah, please, if you feel like, you know, do remind me of it but it is actually based on the final report that we will be submitting to the funder as well. So, yeah, we will try to subtract the most important information from it and then distribute it to the participants who contributed to the research.**

**So, yeah, I will just use your email address I have available for the Amazon voucher, so I will send that out to you today, so it will include like a code you can use when you order something online from £10 so it’s, I mean it’s a minor thing but it’s just to say that, yeah, we really appreciate your thoughts and your efforts to contribute.**

**So before we close off or wrap up, do you want to say anything else or have questions?**

R: No, I must admit initially I was thinking I wouldn’t actually be able to help very much, but actually it feels like it’s been a bit different to that.

I: **Yeah, I think a lot of people are a bit hesitant to participate even if they only used a specific element of the platform or they only used it a couple of times, I think they can still very well explain and tell us how they would actually use it, or how they would see it, you know, to be improved, so yeah, I think we’re just collating people who use it a lot compared to people who use it less, and just see what their perspective is and what there is in common and what are the differences, so in that sense it’s interesting I think.**

R: Yeah, and I’ll be fascinated by seeing what comes out of it.

I: **Thank you Steve, that’s so lovely. Yeah, I hope you’re keeping safe and also with your shielding, I hope summer will bring a bit more normality back to our lives, but it was really wonderful and lovely to speak to you and I’m so happy you contributed to the research as well.**

R: You’re very welcome.

I: **Thank you so much Steve. If there’s anything after the interview when we hang up, just please feel free to email me.**

R: Okay, fine.

I: **Yeah.**

R: Right, thank you very much.

I: **Have a lovely evening. Thank you so much Steve. Bye.**

R: Bye.

[ENDS]