

MEDIC ALERT MEMBERSHIP SAVES LIVES.

The British and Irish Lions clubs brought Medic Alert to Europe from the US almost forty years ago. Medic Alert is now an independent, non-profit making organisation. Along with their other charitable work, Lions clubs distribute Medic Alert leaflets, posters and application forms to doctors' surgeries and hospital departments. Lions clubs promote Medic Alert locally in their community, and if possible help people with sponsored membership, if they have limited income.

Who benefits from Medic Alert membership?

The Medic Alert emblem is worn on a neck pendant or wrist bracelet. It carries Medic Alert information and vital details about the wearer, their personal ID number and a twenty-four hour emergency telephone number. This service is based in the London Ambulance Service headquarters, and trained staff responds to calls anywhere in the world, in more than a hundred languages.

Allergies, diabetes, epilepsy, clotting disorders and high blood pressure are the commonest reasons for becoming a Medic Alert member, present. People with memory problems, implanted devices (e.g. pacemakers), rare blood groups, "hidden" or rare disorders, taking steroids or on multiple medications also benefit from membership. Those who have made living wills or advance medical directives have also joined.

In fact anyone who wants his or her next of kin to be notified in an emergency should join Medic Alert.

What should Lions clubs be doing to help Medic Alert?

There are less than a quarter of a million Medic Alert members in the UK. At least one in three of the population has a medical problem that would justify joining Medic Alert and wearing their emblem. Medic Alert is aiming to launch a public awareness campaign of their life-saving work in the near future and Lions clubs are therefore asked to

1. Carry out a targeted "drop" of Medic Alert literature to as many doctors' surgeries, hospitals, pharmacists, dentists and health-related personnel and organisations as possible.*
2. Promote local awareness of Medic Alert through the media and community publicity.
3. See if and how they can assist new membership by financial support, where appropriate.

September will be Medic Alert month. Next year, the last week in July will be Medic Alert Awareness Week.

- * You should be able to obtain a list of doctors, hospitals, pharmacists and other health-related "targets" from your Primary Care Trust, or Local Health Authority.

Do you have a Club Medic Alert Officer?

This individual could also promote the Lions Eye Health Programme.

Dr. Michael F. Green, Medic Alert District Officer 105W