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PRESS RELEASE

Blood Sugar - - Problem at Red Hot Chili Peppers Concert

A Belfast student who has Type 1 Diabetes has been awarded £2,000 by Belfast County Court, after security personnel employed by Eventsec Ltd confiscated a bottle of Lucozade from her at a Red Hot Chili Peppers concert.

The student, Kayla Hanna, was on her way into the concert at Boucher Road, Belfast in August 2016 when the bottle of Lucozade was taken from her.

"I carry Lucozade with me at all times as it gives me the glucose I need if my blood sugar levels go down," Kayla Hanna said. "When the security guard told me I couldn't bring the bottle in I told her of my condition and showed her the tattoos on my wrist which indicate I have diabetes. She said that "anyone could have that" so I also showed her my insulin pack and the meter used to check my levels. She consulted with another guard and they insisted that they had a strict policy and they would not allow me to bring the drink inside."

"I was very anxious and upset throughout the concert," Kayla said. "I stood away from the area near the stage where my friends were because I was afraid something would happen to me and I would not have the Lucozade. This had never happened me at other concerts I went to. I really hope that, now this issue has been brought to light, it won't happen again to me or other people who live with diabetes."

Kayla contacted the Equality Commission who supported her to bring a case before Belfast County Court alleging a breach of the Disability Discrimination Act. The Court made a finding of discrimination and Judge Gilpin stated that Eventsec had failed to provide a reasonable adjustment to its policy of not allowing liquids to be brought into the concert.

"These are the kind of circumstances in which the reasonable adjustment provisions in the Disability Discrimination Act can be most beneficial," Mary Kitson, Senior Legal Officer, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland said. "They are in the Act to ensure that people with disabilities are not denied access to services by reason of general policies which can, in themselves, be otherwise justifiable and necessary."

"In this case, the company should have made arrangements to ensure that Kayla could have accessed Lucozade during the concert if needed, for example by directing her to its own medical centre at the venue and providing her with a bottle of Lucozade. That would have been a simple adjustment and would have met her medical needs. The court has ruled that this was a breach of the law and awarded Kayla £2,000."