

Weight Watchers testing shows positive signs in reducing type 2 diabetes by 70% in ongoing quest to prevent £10 billion annual cost to NHS

Diabetes is a health epidemic currently affecting four million Brits, a figure predicted to rise to five million by 2025. As it stands, diabetes costs the nation £10 billion every year, with 80% of this spend allocated to complications from the disease. Given the estimated five million Brits with pre-diabetes, the Association of Public Health Observatories predicts the total healthcare cost of diabetes to rise to £16.9 billion by 2035/2036.

The Weight Watchers Diabetes Prevention Programme (DPP) guides people to make better lifestyle choices, improving nutrition and activity habits and achieving healthy weight loss and providing 24-hour support. It has been proven in two separate, independent studies as an effective programme to help combat and prevent type 2 diabetes.

The London Borough of Bromley was selected as the first community in Europe to trial the Weight Watchers DPP as a method of reducing the rise of type 2 diabetes in 2014. Involving over 130 GP referred patients, by the six month mark of the trial 70% of participants were no longer at risk of diabetes and a further 17% had reduced their risk significantly*. This programme will be launching in Buckinghamshire in July and is now available nationally for any local authority or CCG to tap into.

Carolyn Piper, Public Health Programme Manager, London Borough Bromley says:

“Bromley was incredibly pleased to be chosen as the first borough in Britain to trial the Weight Watchers programme. Two years on from its introduction, we continue to see its positive effects in our community every day. When first trialled, Bromley ranked as having the third highest prevalence of obesity in London and it was clear a proactive plan needed to be put in place. Now, Bromley has fewer people on the brink of type 2 diabetes and this will have direct and immediate impact on the person, but also on our health services. To have witnessed such success without the addition of strain on an already burdened healthcare system is heartening.”

In 2015, Public Health England published a review of real world DPP programmes provided by a whole host of providers, and concluded that on average they could be successful in preventing 26% of people at high-risk prediabetes from going on to fully develop the condition. Earlier this year, a study conducted by the Indiana University School of Medicine and published in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that the Weight Watchers programme led to participants losing significantly more weight with better blood glucose control in comparison to those following a self-initiated DPP programme.

The Weight Watchers DPP is an accessible and effective approach to diabetes management and prevention without requiring the creation of additional infrastructure and in the existing healthcare system. With NICE compliant curriculum, the programme affords its users a crucial level of flexibility necessary for success in today's increasingly busy lifestyle.

Head of Public Health and Programme for Weight Watchers, Zoe Griffiths commented:

“The rise of diabetes in England has been drastic. It is a disease that affects all ages and Weight Watchers is pleased to have been at the helm of introducing an approach that is proven to provide a positive and marked change in the lives of those at risk of type 2 diabetes. We look forward to seeing the continued progress this initiative will have.

“Our Diabetes Prevention Programme incorporates the flexibility and support our members prize in our regular meetings, coupled with extra information and initiatives specific to reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes, through a healthier lifestyle and weight loss. With classes available across the country throughout the week and online, it is a realistic answer to diabetes prevention.”

For more information on Weight Watchers please visit:

<https://www.weightwatchers.com/uk/>

For more information on how Weight Watchers can benefit diabetics, please visit:

<https://www.weightwatchers.com/uk/healthy-living/leading-healthy-lifestyle/type-2-diabetes>

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Notes to Editors

References

1. Diabetes UK. 2015. Facts and Stats
([https://www.diabetes.org.uk/Documents/Position statements/Diabetes UK Facts and Stats_Dec 2015.pdf](https://www.diabetes.org.uk/Documents/Position%20statements/Diabetes%20UK%20Facts%20and%20Stats_Dec%202015.pdf))
2. Diabetes UK. 2014. The Cost of Diabetes Report
(<https://www.diabetes.org.uk/Documents/Diabetes%20UK%20Cost%20of%20Diabetes%20Report.pdf>)

*The full 12 months results will be available later in 2016

For more information please contact:

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About Weight Watchers International, Inc.

Weight Watchers International, Inc. is the world's leading commercial provider of weight management services, operating globally through a network of Company-owned and franchise operations. Weight Watchers holds more than 32,000 meetings each week where members receive group support and learn about healthy eating patterns, behavior modification and physical activity. Weight Watchers provides innovative, digital weight management products through its websites, mobile sites and apps. Weight Watchers is the leading provider of paid digital subscription weight management products in the world. Weight Watchers offers a wide range of food products, publications and programmes for those interested in a healthier lifestyle.