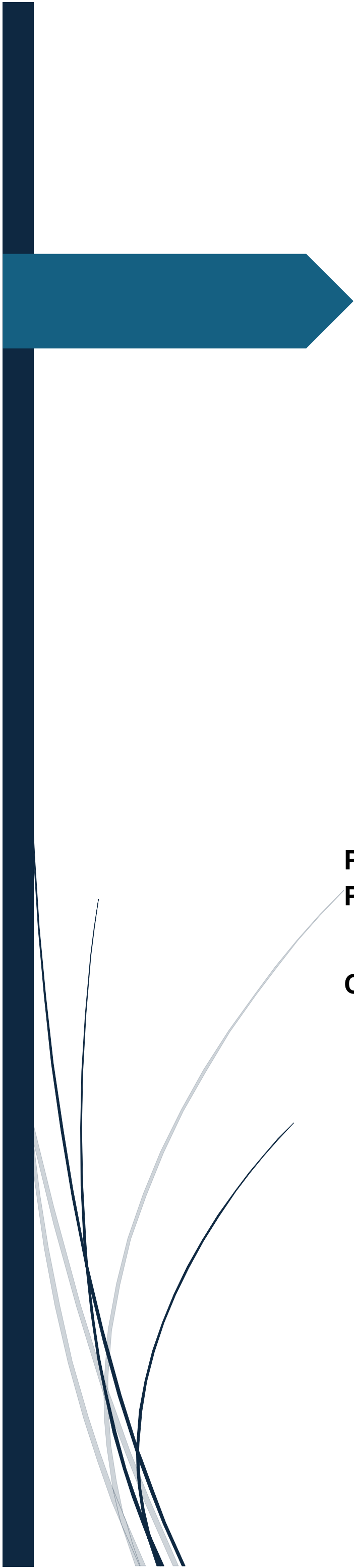




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MSc Public Health and Social Care in Practice

**Population Health and Digital Health
Promotion LCHS7009**

Component 2: Poster



NHS DIGITAL WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME:

Applying Health Promotion Principles and the COM-B Model to Address Obesity and Improve Population Health in England

Digital

Aim: To examine how the NHS Digital Weight Management Programme, informed by health promotion principles and the COM-B model, can support sustainable behaviour change and contribute to improved population health.

BACKGROUND

Obesity is one of England's most significant public health challenges, contributing to increased risks of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, stroke and at least 13 cancers (WHO, 2025).

Approximately 66% of adults in England are overweight or living with obesity, including around 30% living with obesity (NHS Digital, 2024).

Obesity places considerable pressure on NHS services and disproportionately affects socioeconomically disadvantaged populations.

KEY STATISTICS (NHS Digital, 2024)



2 in 3

Adults in England are overweight or living with obesity.



66%

Adults are overweight or obese.



30%

Adults are living with obesity.

PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGE



OBESITY

Public Health Challenge



66% Adults Overweight or Living with Obesity



Increased Risk of:

- Type 2 Diabetes
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Stroke
- 13 Cancers



Increased NHS Demand



Need for Digital Health Promotion

POPULATION HEALTH PERSPECTIVE

Buck et al. (2018) argue that improving population health requires action across the wider determinants of health rather than healthcare alone. Similarly, Lalonde (1974) recognised that health is influenced by lifestyle, environment, healthcare and biology.

The NHS Digital Weight Management Programme reflects this whole-system approach by promoting healthier behaviours while complementing broader public health strategies.

WIDER DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



Lifestyle



Environment



Healthcare



Biology

↓

Obesity

↓

NHS Digital Weight Management Programme

↓

Behaviour Change & Self-management

↓

Improved Population Health

HEALTH PROMOTION PRINCIPLES

The programme is grounded in core health promotion principles:

- Equity (Whitehead, 1992)**
Ensures inclusive access to digital support for all, with a focus on reducing health inequalities.
- Empowerment (Naidoo & Wills, 2016)**
Builds skills, confidence and self-efficacy to enable individuals to take control of their health.
- Participation (Naidoo & Wills, 2016)**
Encourages active involvement of individuals in their behaviour change journey.
- Social Justice (Whitehead, 1992)**
Addresses social and structural determinants of obesity to create fairer health outcomes for all. (Whitehead, 1992; WHO, 1986; Naidoo & Wills, 2016)

COM-B MODEL (Michie, van Stralen & West, 2011)



Behaviour change occurs when individuals have the Capability, Opportunity and Motivation to perform the desired behaviour.

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE IN PRACTICE



COM-B DIAGRAM



APPLICATION TO PROGRAMME



EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS



BENEFITS VS CHALLENGES



EXPECTED OUTCOMES

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

- NHS pilot evaluation (2021-22) showed mean weight loss of 3.2 kg at 12 weeks.
- High user satisfaction (87%) and good adherence.
- Improvements in diet quality, physical activity and wellbeing.
- Cost-effective compared with traditional face-to-face services.

BENEFITS (Baciu et al., 2019)

- ✓ Accessible, free NHS intervention at scale
- ✓ Supports self-management and autonomy
- ✓ Evidence-based behaviour change techniques
- ✓ Improves lifestyle behaviours and health outcomes
- ✓ Potential to reduce long-term NHS costs
- ✓ Supports health inequalities agenda if equitably delivered

CHALLENGES (Baciu et al., 2019)

- ⚠ Digital exclusion for some population groups
- ⚠ Variable engagement and drop-out rates
- ⚠ Reliance on self-report data
- ⚠ Limited long-term outcome evidence
- ⚠ Requires integration with wider support services

EXPECTED OUTCOMES (Michie, van Stralen & West, 2011)

- 🍏 Improved dietary behaviours
- 🚶 Increased physical activity
- 💪 Greater confidence and self-management
- 🔄 Sustainable behaviour change
- ❤️ Reduced obesity-related disease risk
- 🏥 Reduced long-term NHS demand

POLICY

Supports NHS Long Term Plan priorities by promoting prevention, digital transformation and reducing obesity-related inequalities.

EDUCATION

Improves digital health literacy, supports patient self-management and encourages healthcare professionals to integrate digital health promotion into practice.

RESEARCH

Future research should evaluate long-term effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, sustained behaviour change and the impact of digital interventions on reducing health inequalities.



KEY TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

The NHS Digital Weight Management Programme demonstrates how digital technology can support evidence-based health promotion by combining education, behaviour change theory and personalised coaching. While digital interventions offer significant opportunities to improve population health, equitable implementation is essential to ensure that digital innovation reduces rather than reinforces health inequalities.



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