

Access to specialist weight management services in West Yorkshire

October 2024

NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (WYICB) has been made aware of the availability of remote tier 3 weight management services under the Patient Choice Framework.

Patients have a legal right to choice when:

- the service to be referred to is led by a consultant or mental health professional, **AND**
- the referral is made by a GP, dentist or optometrist for a first outpatient appointment (new episode of care), including when a referral is first assessed by an interface service on their behalf, **AND**
- the referral is clinically appropriate as determined by the referrer, **AND**
- the ICB has an existing NHS standard contract for the service in question or the provider has an alternative qualifying NHS standard contract under which it can accept referrals under the right to choice

WYICB approach to remote specialist weight management services

WYICB emphasises that any service referred under patient choice must meet required standards and the WYICB clinical criteria and access thresholds for access to weight loss drugs in West Yorkshire.

See the: [access to weight loss drugs in West Yorkshire 220524 document](#)

WYICB has not directly commissioned a remote specialist weight management service but is working to increase local capacity where possible. However, under the right to choose, all patients across England can select a consultant-led service if it is clinically appropriate **and they meet the service's eligibility criteria.**

Risks of referrals to non-contracted organisations

There are both clinical and financial risks to making referrals to organisations not directly contracted by WYICB.

Clinical risks: WYICB cannot assure quality or appropriateness of these services. This risk therefore remains the responsibility of the referring clinician.

Financial risks: if there is no evidence of an appropriate qualifying NHS standard contract in place, the ICB is not obliged to pay for the activity.

Eligibility criteria for the service commissioned by NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board

The service commissioned by NHS Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (BSW ICB) has the following eligibility criteria which **must** be met in order for a patient to be referred. Note that other services may have different criteria.

These criteria apply to all referrals, including West Yorkshire patients, and are not just applicable to patients from (BSW ICB).

Service specification and eligibility criteria

The specialist consultant-led tier 3 weight management service offers a remote (via app or telephone), 12 to 24-month programme of care comprising multi-disciplinary team assessment and individual treatment sessions. The service will accept elective

referrals using a tier 3 multi-disciplinary weight management service referral form from the patient's GP, via eRS or nhs.net.

A referral **must** be accompanied with:

- completed blood investigations
- height
- weight
- BMI at time of referral
- details of how the patient has actively or persistently engaged with losing weight with a structured tier 2 service or equivalent programme

Inclusion criteria

- At least 18 years of age **AND**
- BMI criteria:
 - BMI ≥ 40 **OR**
 - BMI ≥ 35 with co-morbidities **AND**
- Must be assessed as ready or motivated to change **AND**
- are fully committed to participating in the programme

Any participant awaiting bariatric surgery who has not accessed a tier 3 programme **AND** meets **ALL** the above criteria may also be referred.

Please note that in line with the West Yorkshire implementation framework, there is a BMI reduction of 2.5 units on each element of the criteria above for people of Black African, Caribbean and South Asian origin due to the higher risk from obesity related complications.

Implementation framework

Implementation framework: clinical staff should consider the [West Yorkshire implementation framework for prioritising access to weight loss drugs](#) when having the shared decision-making conversation with the patient about whether to refer.

Treatment duration: patients in West Yorkshire should be aware that treatment usually lasts one year, compared to up to two years in the BSW ICB service specification. Weight loss goals must be met at six months to continue treatment into months seven to 12.

Exclusion criteria

Some important exclusion criteria apply to the BSW ICB commissioned service. The following patients should not be referred (although individual funding approval may be available):

- Pregnant or breastfeeding **OR**
- Uncontrolled hypertension / heart condition / medical condition preventing increased activity level **OR**
- Active or suspected eating disorders, including binge eating disorder **OR**
- Bariatric surgery in the past two years **OR**
- Unstable or severe mental illness, including suicide attempts in the past 12 months. This may prevent engagement with the behaviour change programme **OR**
- Unstable alcohol or drug use (can be referred if the patient has received support and been in recovery for 3 months) **OR**
- Unstable hypothyroidism (can be referred if stable) **OR**
- Unstable Cushing's syndrome (can be referred if stable)