

# Tackling obesity in areas of high social deprivation: clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of a task-based weight management group programme – a randomised controlled trial and economic evaluation

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## Plain English summary

### Obesity in areas of high social deprivation

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## Plain English summary

An increasing number of people in the UK require help to manage their weight. The NHS currently offers advice in general practice, sometimes accompanied by slimming medications and a referral to the practice nurse or dietitian. Although this is helpful for some patients, more effective approaches are needed that can be disseminated economically on a large scale, possibly in parallel with the successful Stop Smoking Service (SSS).

The Weight Action Programme (WAP) is a weight loss intervention that provides participants with tools to lose weight and maintain a long-term healthy lifestyle. In the eight weekly sessions, participants are equipped with tools to maintain a healthy lifestyle, with weekly individualised tasks and peer-support group sessions. The initial course is followed by 10 monthly maintenance sessions.

The trial was designed to see if the WAP provides long-term benefits over and above the effect of a 'best practice' weight management intervention provided in primary care by practice nurses.

The nurse intervention consisted of four one-to-one sessions delivered at fortnightly intervals over 8 weeks that included standard advice on diet and physical activity based on NHS 'Change4Life' materials and motivational support.

A total of 330 obese adults who wanted to lose weight were randomly assigned to the WAP or the nurse intervention. All participants were followed up at 2, 6 and 12 months.

One year after the start of the programme, participants who received the WAP had lost significantly more weight (4.2 kg) than those who received help from a practice nurse (2.1 kg). Economic analysis conducted in this study suggests that the WAP may represent value for money if implemented in the NHS. Both groups found their weight loss programme helpful.

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