

# weight & health now

Slimming World's quarterly newsletter for health professionals



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**Welcome** to the 14th edition of Weight & Health Now, our round-up of the latest Slimming World news and research.

If you'd like further details on any of these articles or about Slimming World in general please contact us using the address overleaf.

Best wishes

*Jacquie Lavin*

Recently published 34,000 patient audit shows how

## Slimming World supports the NHS



Slimming World has conducted the largest ever UK audit of a partnership between the NHS and a commercial weight management company. Published in the April 2011 edition of 'Obesity Facts', the audit looked at 34,271 people who were referred by their doctor or another health professional to a local Slimming World group, giving them access to 12 weeks of support paid for by the NHS. The 12-week referral service is provided by Slimming World to the NHS at a subsidised rate of £47.39 per patient (ex VAT).

The data was collected from patients within 77 NHS Trusts referred between May 2004 and November 2009. Participants lost an average of 4% body weight over the 12-week referral period, with those who attended the most meetings recording the biggest weight losses. Around 60 per cent of people completed at least 10 out of 12 weeks, losing a clinically significant<sup>1</sup> 5.5 per cent of their body weight on average. Some health trusts offer selected patients longer referral periods beyond the 12 weeks. Initial analysis suggests that patients who are referred to Slimming World for a second period record an average weight loss of around 8.5 per cent after six months.

Previous research by Slimming World<sup>2</sup> found that more than half of people who are referred to Slimming World by the NHS go on to self fund after they have used their free vouchers, providing the NHS with 'added value' through continued weight loss paid for by the patient themselves.

Dr James Stubbs, Slimming World research specialist, says: "This audit demonstrates how slimming clubs provide the NHS with cost-effective, community based solutions that offer the public guidance, support and engagement on a national scale.

"We know that the NHS is stretched and it just isn't realistic to expect GPs or other health professionals like practice nurses or even dietitians to provide patients with the regular week-by-week support and ongoing advice they need to successfully lose weight and keep it off. Those in the NHS who are able to offer the level of support needed can only reach a limited number of patients as they don't have the infrastructure to engage the public in their hundreds of thousands.

"Based on the most up-to-date practices in nutrition, group support and the psychology of behaviour change, Slimming World, which has around 7,500 groups nationwide at the heart of communities, can meet the need for obesity solutions at a grass roots level. At a

time when the NHS is looking to provide cost effective high quality care, this model could be the first rung of the ladder when it comes to tackling obesity."

John Wilcox, Public Health Development Manager for NHS Nottingham City, who has been referring patients to Slimming World since March 2009, says: "The Slimming World on Referral scheme enables eligible Nottingham City patients to obtain locally accessible evidence based support to lose weight. Overall, this approach provides good value for money when compared to other lifestyle behaviour change and weight management interventions".

<sup>1</sup> National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) (2006) Obesity Guidelines state that a clinically significant weight loss is 5 per cent or more

<sup>2</sup> Lavin JH, Avery A, Whitehead SM, Rees E, Parsons J, Bagnall T, Barth JH, Ruxton CHS: Feasibility and benefits of implementing a Slimming World on Referral service in primary care using a commercial weight management partner. Public Health 2006;120:872-881



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because you're amazing



Slimming World's 'Man of the Year' Stuart Howells lost 12st 5lbs with Slimming World

# Slimming World is a man's world too!

A survey of 2,340 people by Slimming World and YouGov found that while two thirds of men want to slim down and the average man wants to lose 2st 4lbs, 59 per cent have never been on a diet.

Only around five per cent of Slimming World's 400,000 weekly members are men, yet research published in the Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics<sup>3</sup> shows that when men do join a Slimming World group they lose weight at a faster rate than women. The study showed that in 12 weeks men lose an average of 23.5lbs and 91 per cent lose at least five per cent body weight, while at 24 weeks, 69 per cent of men achieve a 10 per cent weight loss.

Men who come to Slimming World have often been encouraged to join by a partner, friend or family member, so during Men's Health Week (June 13-19) Slimming World is launching a campaign to mobilise its members to encourage any men in their life who are struggling with their weight to come along to a Slimming World group.

For every new member an existing member brings to group during Men's Health Week they'll receive a free week themselves.

Stuart Howells, Slimming World's Man of the Year who lost 12 stone and recently ran the London Marathon, says: "Lots of men mistakenly think that slimming clubs are just for women. We worry about being the only man there and dread the idea of having to live on small portions and count or measure everything we eat."

"However Slimming World's not like that at all! Once I walked through the doors of my Slimming World group I found a wonderful atmosphere and an amazing support network. I take my inspiration from new members. We share experience and ideas and support each other on our weight loss journeys. It's great to know I can fill up on healthy satisfying foods that I enjoy, from a Sunday roast to chilli con carne, and still lose weight. The transformation in me has been amazing. I know how I felt when I started and how difficult that first step is but it's the best step I've ever taken and I really didn't have anything to fear."

<sup>3</sup> Bye, C, Avery A & Lavin J. Tackling obesity in men: preliminary evaluation of men-only groups within a commercial slimming organisation. Journal of Human Nutrition & Dietetics 18(6), 2005.



## Slimmers did miles for SMILES

Slimming World members have been getting more active *and* doing their bit for charity as part of the annual 'Miles for SMILES' event – where slimmers raise money for Slimming World's nominated charity, this year the NSPCC, by getting sponsored to cover miles in whatever way they choose.



Running from April 30 to May 28, this year's event incorporated a series of 'Parties in the Park' with fun activities like charity cycle rides, one mile walks, zumba classes, salsa dancing, belly dancing and bootcamp training to give visitors a taste of new activities they might find enjoyable. Slimming World encourages members to introduce activity into their lives as part of its behaviour change programme.

Thousands of people joined in the fun at the Party in the Park events and cheered on Ben Miles (son of Slimming World founder Margaret Miles-Bramwell) who stopped off at events in Oxford, Peterborough, Derby, York and Sunderland on the UK leg of his 6,000km charity cycle ride across Europe to raise money for the cause.



### Diary dates

**4th-6th July:** Nutrition Society Summer Meeting 2011, University of Reading – Slimming World's nutrition and research team will be presenting their findings on the financial costs of healthy eating on **Tuesday 5th July**.

**15th-16th June:** Commissioning 2011, Olympia London – Slimming World's referral and nutrition team will be hosting stand 128 and will be available to answer any questions on the company's research and referral service.