

# Slimming World on Referral (SWoR): Impact of an extended referral on weight outcomes

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## Introduction

The Slimming World on Referral (SWoR) service is a well-established solution for weight management in the UK and involves health professionals referring patients to local Slimming World community groups for weekly weight management support. Referrals are funded by the health trust and are free for the patient. Referrals are made in 12 week packages, with the option for health professionals to refer for longer periods depending on locally determined commissioning criteria, patient eligibility and need.

Recent audits of commissioned referral services have focused on 12 week outcomes; the last audit of extended (six month) referrals was conducted in 2012 with 4,754 members<sup>1,2</sup>. The aim of this research was to report on six month weight outcomes for those receiving an extended referral in the past seven years.

## Methods

Electronic weekly weight records were collated from SWoR members who had joined between September 2010 and May 2017 and received two consecutive referrals. To be included in the analysis, members must have started their second referral period within two weeks of their first referral ending.

Using a last observation carried forward model, this analysis reports weight change outcomes following the initial 12 weeks and the subsequent 12 week referral period. Data were analysed using Microsoft Excel.

## Results

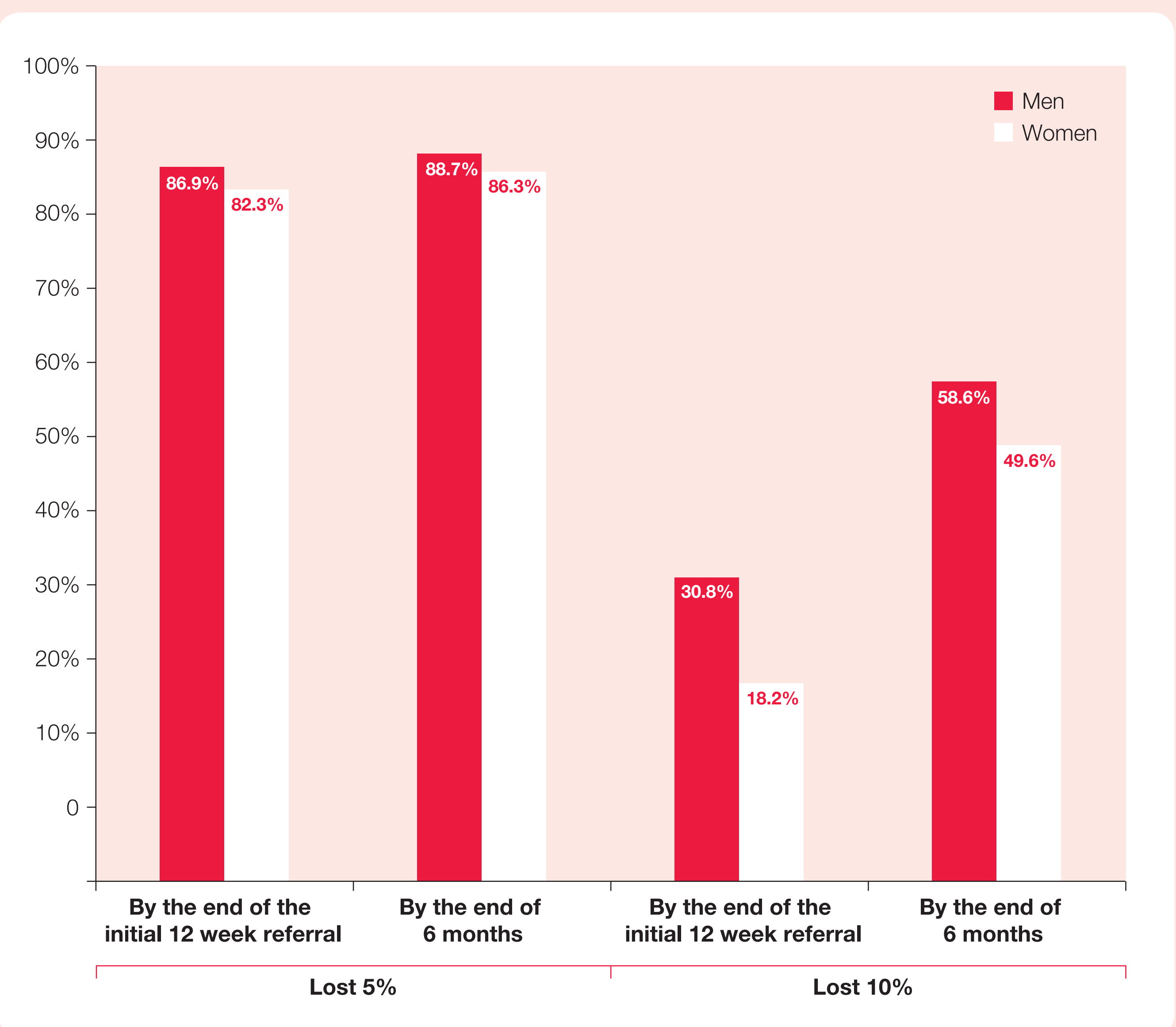
- 19,899 extended referrals were issued; 13,393 members attended within two weeks of their first referral ending and were included in the analysis.
- Following the first referral, members lost an average of 7.6% (7.9kg), with a mean BMI reduction of 2.9kg/m<sup>2</sup>. During the extended referral period, members lost an additional 2.6% (2.7kg), further reducing their BMI by 0.9kg/m<sup>2</sup>.
- This resulted in an average total weight loss of 10.5% (10.4kg), with a mean BMI reduction of 3.8kg/m<sup>2</sup>.

### Recorded weights and BMIs across the six month referral period

		Initial 12 week referral	2nd 12 week referral
Weight (kg)	Start	103.5	95.2
	End	95.6	92.6
	Change	-7.9 (7.6%)	-2.6 (2.7%)
BMI(kg/m <sup>2</sup> )	Start	38.0	35.0
	End	35.1	34.0
	Change	-2.9	-0.9
Sessions attended (maximum 12)		11.5	10.0

- At the end of the first referral, 20% had achieved a weight loss of 10% or more; this increased to 51% of members by the end of the extended six month referral.
- At the end of six months the majority (87%) had achieved 5% or more
- Men lost slightly more weight than women (11.5% vs 10.3%) and had a greater reduction in BMI (4.3kg/m<sup>2</sup> vs 3.73kg/m<sup>2</sup>).

### Percentage of men and women achieving 5% and 10% weight loss across the six month referral period



## Conclusions

This research demonstrates that those who receive an extended referral to Slimming World go on to lose additional weight, with 87% achieving a 5% loss and 51% achieving a 10% by the end of the six month referral period.

Findings indicate that provision of further referral periods can enhance weight loss outcomes and support more patients in achieving clinically significant weight loss.

## References

- 1 Stubbs, R.J., Brogelli, D., Whybrow, S., Avery, A., Pallister, C. and Lavin, J.H. (2012). 24-week referral to Slimming World from primary care: weight outcomes for 4,754 adults. *Obesity Facts*, 5(1): 215.
- 2 Stubbs, R.J., Brogelli, D.J., Pallister, C.J., Whybrow, S., Avery, A.J. and Lavin, J.H. (2012). Attendance and weight outcomes in 4,754 adults referred over 6 months to a primary care/commercial weight management partnership scheme. *Clinical Obesity*, 2: 6-14.