

# A study to understand the best ways to support the health and wellbeing of people waiting for help with obesity.

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In Wales, around one in four adults aged 16 and over are living with obesity.

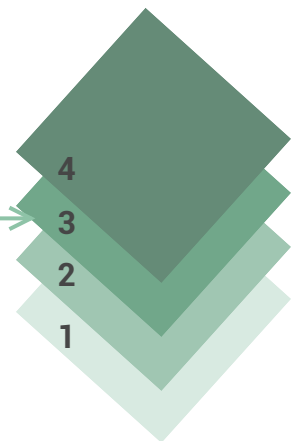


Obesity is considered one of the most significant health challenges worldwide.

As part of the All-Wales Weight Management Pathway there are 4 'tiers' or 'levels' of service.

Patients referred to **Tier 3** services have severe obesity, as well as other medical conditions in some cases.

Some individuals experience long waiting times to access services. **There is a risk that these patients' health and wellbeing may worsen whilst waiting to be seen.**



## Study aim

The aim of this study was to see what information could be found on the **best and most cost-effective ways to support the health and wellbeing** of people waiting for help with obesity.

This study was requested by the Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board Weight Management Service to help them understand potential ways to improve.

The researchers searched for scientific reports on this subject from across the world. They found 7 relevant studies, published between 2017 and 2024 in a range of countries, including:



Canada



Turkey



Australia



Germany



Spain

As there was no research specific to Tier 3 services, they looked at methods for supporting adults with obesity on any waiting list.

## What did they find?



### Exercise

Four of the studies showed some evidence of improving quality of life and mental wellbeing through exercise. Other approaches included:



### Text message-based support

Helpful information and advice sent to patients by text message.



### Pre-operative educational support

Education provided direct to patients waiting for surgery.



### Physical activity counselling

Talking therapies to help encourage physical activity and exercise.

Most support methods required:

- substantial input from a healthcare professional
- specialist equipment
- complex / advanced digital systems

However, unfortunately, most of the studies reviewed by the researchers were of low scientific quality.

**Because of this, they cannot be confident in the true benefits of these approaches and recommend caution when trying to apply them to real-life settings.**



## What didn't they find?



- No UK based studies were found
- No solutions that could be easily applied on a bigger scale to a real-life setting
- No information on how cost-effective these solutions were

## What next?

Health Boards should consider:

- Collecting more information in this area to better understand what can be done to support the health and wellbeing people waiting for help with obesity.
- Looking at solutions that can be easily used on a larger scale.



For more information on this study, and to read the full report - click here!

**[https://researchwalesevidencecentre.co.uk/Obesity\\_Waiting\\_Lists](https://researchwalesevidencecentre.co.uk/Obesity_Waiting_Lists)**

