

Introduction of a Biopsychosocial Assessment to the Adult Weight Management Service

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Project Background:

The Adult Weight Management Service (AWMS) was established in 2013 and until 2021 consisted of predominantly dietetic and psychological pathways with some medical input.

In 2021 funding was received to enable the pathway to be strengthened and physiotherapy and occupational therapy were added to ensure a full MDT for the Level 3 AWMS.

The assessment consisted of service users having a dietetic assessment as their first appointment to assess their needs and signpost them to the most appropriate treatment pathway. In practice it took a median of 3 appointments to identify if service users' needs were outside of the dietetic pathways. This resulted in delays in patients being signposted into the appropriate intervention and duplication of assessment with service users having to repeat the same information multiple times.

With the addition of new pathways within the MDT, this process was no longer fit for purpose.

Project Aims/Objectives:

- To achieve a reduction in the number of appointments needed to identify individuals needs by the introduction of a multidisciplinary biopsychosocial (BPS) assessment as the first appointment within the Level 3 AWMS.
- To ensure the full range of disciplines available within the AWMS are reflected in the BPS assessment and to reduce duplication by removing the need for profession specific assessments.
- To improve service user experience.

Project Approach:

A multidisciplinary BPS assessment proforma was developed by the MDT and training was provided to all clinicians within the Level 3 AWMS.

The BPS assessment clinics were delivered predominantly virtually via the platform Attend Anywhere.

A fortnightly MDT meeting was established to discuss each service user who had been through the BPS assessment clinics.

A short questionnaire was automatically sent to service users to assess their experience and perspectives of the new assessment process.

Project Outcomes:

A new multidisciplinary biopsychosocial assessment was initiated as the first appointment for individuals living with complex obesity attending the Level 3 Weight Management Service. The new process merged individual professional assessments into one holistic biopsychosocial assessment that enabled the service users to tell their story and discuss the history and background to their weight and health at one time, in one place, to one person.

Project Impact:

253 people attended a virtual BPS assessment between January and December 2023. 100% of these had their weight related needs identified at this appointment.

36 people completed the patient experience questionnaire with 97% reporting they 'always' felt listened to in the appointment (figure 1) and 80% rating their experience as a 9 or 10 on a scale of 1-10 (figure 2). The model is cost effective with the BPS model **saving £15 - £30 per service user** compared to the old model of single profession assessment, and **£36 to £49 per patient** compared to a model of multiple profession specific assessments.

Staff at more junior bandings have been upskilled to deliver this specialist assessment which is possible due to the ongoing clinical supervision and governance provided by senior clinicians via the fortnightly MDT meeting.

Figure 3: Key words to describe service users experience



I like to think patients genuinely feel listened to and their experiences/difficulties validated from being a part of this process. Clinician

My clinician was so kind and easy to talk to and it was the first dietitian meeting that I've had where I didn't feel judged and defeated. I came away feeling hopeful and positive that changes can be made and that I can be helped and supported in making those changes. Service User

I felt validated and a clear lack of judgement was hugely beneficial to my ability to open up and divulge some extremely personal, traumatic information about my history. Service User

Key Conclusions:

The BPS assessment model enables service users to have their weight related needs identified in one appointment.

It enables service users to have access to all of the disciplines within the MDT without having to duplicate assessments

It is a safe, equitable and cost effective model of assessment for people within a Level 3 AWMS.

Next Steps:

Streamline the administrative processes around the clinic to increase service capacity.

Continue to gather patient experience data.

Evaluate the outcomes of the interventions within the AWMS following on from the biopsychosocial assessment.

Figure 1: Thinking about your appointment today, did you feel you were listened to and understood?

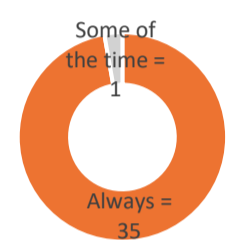


Figure 2: Service user's experience on a scale of 1 - 10 (1 = very poor, 10 = very good)

