NHS
Cheshire and Merseyside

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Changes to referral criteria for Tier 3 Specialist Weight Management Services

Why is the NHS making this change?

Demand for specialist services significantly exceeds capacity. The revised criteria will ensure that people with the greatest clinical need and most complex health conditions are prioritised for specialist multi-disciplinary support.

Will any patient care be cut?

Patients already receiving treatment under this service will not be affected by this change to the referral criteria and will continue to receive care. The changes to referral criteria will only impact access to the service for future patients.

What will happen to patients on the waiting list?

Patients on the waiting list will be reviewed against the new criteria, and detailed plans are currently being developed to manage this process fairly and consistently.

Future patients and those on the waiting list who do not meet the new criteria will no longer be eligible for Tier 3 weight management services but will be offered suitable alternative weight management support.

What support remains for people who do not meet the new criteria?

A range of weight management support remains available for lower risk patients, such as:

- Primary care led weight management interventions
- Community lifestyle and behavioural support services
- NHS digital weight management programmes
- Weight management medications (prescribed in accordance with NICE guidance).

Further information about these alternative provisions will be communicated directly to patients who do not meet the new criteria and can be discussed in clinical conversations with their general practice team.