

## Appendix 1

# Up!Up! Living Lighter the African and Caribbean Way

*Adult tier 2 behavioural weight management service*

## Background

Up!Up! Living Lighter the African and Caribbean Way is a weight management service co-designed by researchers and health professionals from King's College London and Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital, together with Food for Purpose CIC, commissioners, local residents and community leaders. The programme content and delivery is tailored for Lewisham's Black African and Caribbean communities. This contrasts to existing Tier 2 interventions delivered by commercial providers such as Slimming World and Weight Watchers.

Development of Up!Up! used an existing Tier 2 intervention delivered in the neighbouring borough of Southwark as a weight management service model. Incorporated in the service design were key lessons learned from the approach taken with African and Caribbean communities in the Health Eating and Active Lifestyles for Diabetes (HEAL-D) type 2 diabetes self-management programme, insights from the community organisation Food for Purpose, and collaboration with community members and leaders, commissioners, service providers and community organisations. Focus groups, interviews and co-production workshops were used to facilitate shared decision making regarding service structure, format and content.

## Intervention

An initial assessment appointment with a programme facilitator aims to assign participants to the best programme to meet their needs. This might include signposting them to a different service entirely if Up!Up! is not suitable. Participants enrol in a face-to-face or virtual programme comprised of around 15 participants. Face-to-face sessions are held in community centres in those wards in Lewisham with the highest percentage of residents from the Black ethnic backgrounds.

Virtual sessions are held on the video conferencing platform 'BlueJeans'. The one hour long group sessions run weekly for 12 weeks. The curriculum alternates between six nutrition education sessions and six physical activity sessions. Participants are provided with a programme handbook, which has been designed with culturally salient branding, as well as an exercise band. Nutrition sessions use evidence-based behaviour change techniques to support achievement of healthy eating goals, focus on traditional African and Caribbean foods and health beliefs, and physical activity sessions use traditional music to encourage movement and exercise.

Facilitators are themselves of African or Caribbean heritage, and employ an ethos of collectivism, enjoyment, and support to create a community environment. Participants can opt in to guided walking groups run on Saturdays by a local Black grass roots organisation. Participants also participate in a 'cook and taste' session in a community kitchen facility where traditional African and Caribbean recipes are adapted to contain less salt, sugar and fat, and

more wholegrains and vegetables. Participants are followed up at 6 and 12 months to provide ongoing support, and can continue to opt in to the Saturday guided walking groups.

## **Referral Process**

It was identified that up to 25% of Lewisham's Black residents are not registered with Primary Care. In order to maximise inclusion, a self-referral pathway was created in addition to referral from more traditional Primary Care routes. Those self-referring must provide their NHS number as assurance they are eligible for free healthcare. Referral forms are produced using the same distinct branding developed for marketing materials. A central enquiries email address and telephone number is provided on referral forms and all promotional material.

Referrals are received by the pathway coordinating administrative team at Guy's & St. Thomas'. Following patient registration, appointments are generated.

## **Marketing**

Local GPs and healthcare stakeholders have been contacted directly, provided with materials, and informed of both the self-referral and e-referral process. Lewisham community groups were contacted, and service details were circulated via a Community Champions network, Lewisham Public Health Communications Team, community centres, and at face-to-face events.

## **Evaluation**

A pilot evaluation of Up!Up! commenced in April 2022, covering 6 programmes, 3 using face-to-face and 3 using virtual delivery.

98 referrals were received; 63% were self-referrals, the remaining were via primary care; referents were registered with 30 different GP practices in the borough of Lewisham.

92% of referrals were from females, 8% males. The mean age of referrals was 53 years. 54% of referrals were for individuals of Black Caribbean ethnicity, 21% Black African, 17% Black-British and 8% mixed race.

85% of referents attended an initial assessment appointment.

### **Attendance data:**

- 92% attended at least one Up!Up! programme session.
- 56% attended 6 sessions or more.
- 37% completed the programme (attendance at  $\geq 8$  sessions).
- 60% of face to face versus 17% of virtual attendees completed the programme.

### **Outcome data at week 12:**

- Mean weight change: -4.4 kg / 4.5%
- Mean BMI change: -1.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup> / 5.3%
- Mean waist circumference change: -4.7 cm / 4.4%

### **Patient evaluation:**

- 89% agreed/strongly agreed that the programme helped them learn to manage their diet and lifestyle.
- 93% agreed/strongly agreed that they had learned practical skills that they will apply to their daily life.
- 89% agreed/strongly agreed that their physical health had improved since going to Up!Up!.
- 57% agreed or strongly agreed that their emotional health had improved since going to Up!Up!

### **Testimonials/quotes**

Participant A:

“I’ve been waiting for this all my life”.

Participant B:

“This is an important local resource targeting the African Caribbean Communities because it’s a safe and confidential space with like-minded group members. The support network of walking groups, the quality of discussion and the efforts to collectively find solutions for everyday issues and concerns are important”.

Participant C:

“It was a life changing journey. I never knew exercise could be such fun. Thank you for helping us on our journey to a healthier life”.

Service Provider:

“How many providers can say that 96% of participants would strongly recommend the programme to others?”

### **Key learning**

#### *The importance of using co-design methods to develop the intervention*

Our co-design methods enabled us to gain a deep understanding of cultural barriers to engagement with existing weight management services and to understand the needs of the target communities. The co-design work also enabled us to work in partnership with our target communities, and in doing so, overcome issues of distrust.

#### *Working in partnership*

It was clear from the co-design that local communities did not want a large organisation to arrive in Lewisham, take over, and deliver an intervention, without local organisations being central to the process. Local grass roots organisations were not set up to develop business plans or to bid for complex tenders for projects. We aimed to work in partnership with local

organisations, using our expertise to support their growth and development, and we strongly encourage others to adopt this approach.



UpUp Flyer\_PDF  
v1.pdf



UpUp Form  
Editable v1.pdf



UpUp WhatsApp  
Advert v2.png

Up!Up! video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP9HHBuVyc&t=4s>

### Up!Up! Flyer & Self-Referral Form

