



# Worth the Weight: A Quality Improvement Project on Orlistat Prescribing and Weight Management at Greyfriars Medical Centre

Sara Cali – Y3 ScotGEM, supervised by Dr Matt Starostka



## Background

'By 2035, it is predicted that over half of the world's population will be overweight, and almost a quarter of the world's population will be obese' (1).

Obesity and overweight describe excess unhealthy body fat, and can lead to an increased risk of multiple health problems, like cardiac disease, diabetes and cancer. There is associated reduced life expectancy, and significant health service and economic burdens (2).

The majority of these issues can be reduced through appropriate weight management, and NICE provides guidance on this for primary care. Key elements of the guidance include lifestyle advice, referral to weight management services and adjunct drug interventions such as Orlistat (3).

Orlistat prescribing was the initial focus of my project, with an aim to improve current patients' adherence to NICE prescribing guidance.

It became evident mid-way through the project that a new weight management protocol was needed for the practice, in order to provide sustainable change and support for future patients seeking help with weight loss. Thus, the aim of the project was adapted.

## AIM Statement

By May 2023, 100% of patients seeking help with weight loss will be offered the following in accordance with NICE guidance –

- Consistent lifestyle advice
- Appropriate referrals to weight management clinics
- Orlistat prescriptions with appropriate counselling, BMI documentation and follow-up.

## Project Tools and Change Ideas

Various tools such as forcefield analyses, process maps and fishbone diagrams were used to garner a better understanding of current practices regarding patient weight management. The driver diagram helped develop potential change ideas.

Originally, the change ideas centred around improving adherence to Orlistat prescribing guidance. After changing the aim statement, the ideas focussed on creating the weight management protocol and elements like patient information leaflets, and then on practice distribution (figure 1).

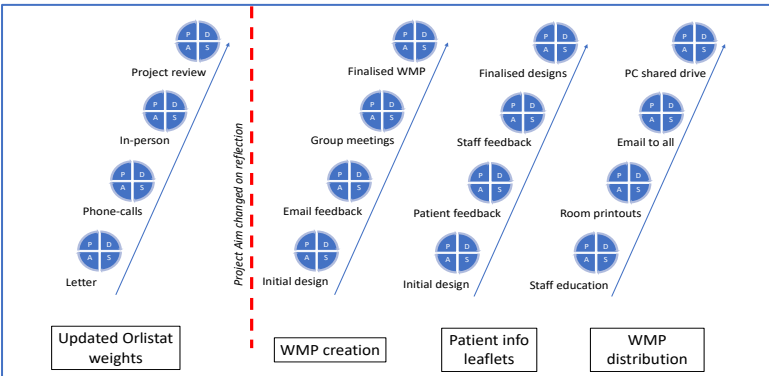


Figure 1 – PDSA ramp cycles

## Measures and Results

There were three key outcome measures – offers of lifestyle advice, weight management clinic referrals and appropriate Orlistat prescribing. The original Orlistat patient group were compared to the new group of patients managed via the weight management protocol as percentages (figure 2).

Process measures included improved staff confidence of weight management care and a huge increase in the number of referrals to the weight management clinic (figure 3).

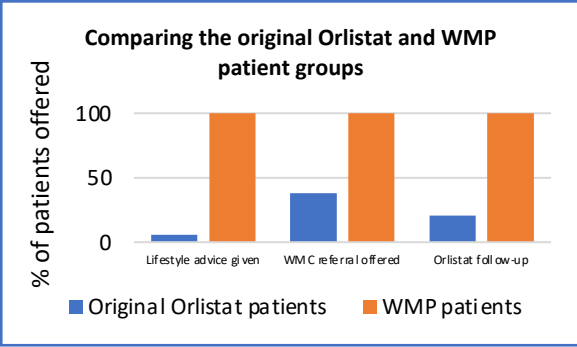


Figure 2 – Bar chart showing outcome measures

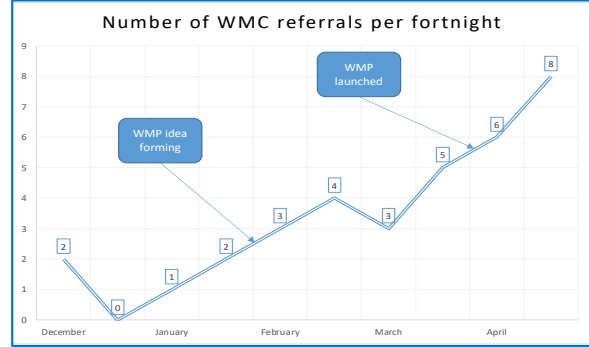


Figure 3 – Run chart showing weight management clinic referrals

## Final Outcomes

- Reliable and long-needed weight management protocol provided for the practice (figure 4)
- Consistent patient care in weight management
- Seamless handover of project to practice pharmacy and administration teams
- Potential for protocol adaptations with new weight loss drugs

### References

- Lobstein et al, 2023. World Obesity Atlas 2023. World Obesity Federation. Atlas 2023, pp10-13. Available from: [https://www.worldobesityday.org/assets/downloads/World\\_Obesity\\_Atlas\\_2023\\_Report.pdf](https://www.worldobesityday.org/assets/downloads/World_Obesity_Atlas_2023_Report.pdf)
- Skolnik and Ryan, 2014. Pathophysiology, epidemiology, and assessment of obesity in adults. The Journal of Family Practice. 63(7), S3-S10. Available from: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25198218/>
- NICE, 2014. Recommendations – Obesity: identification, assessment and management [online]. Available from: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg189/chapter/Recommendations>

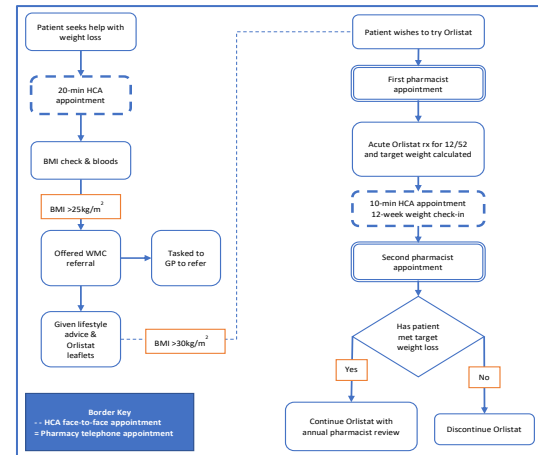


Figure 4 – Weight Management Protocol summary