

## **Opportunity to be involved in research -**

### **Join the 'W8Buddy' Patient and Public Involvement Group**

#### **Hello!**

Thank you for showing interest in our research project! We know this may be the first time you've heard about this study, and we want to give you a bit more information before you decide to get involved. We're building a team that will work together, not only to support this important research but also to learn, teach, and most importantly, have fun throughout the process.

#### **What's the study about?**

Our project is focused on using digital technology to help people living with obesity. We're looking at a tool called Gro Health W8Buddy, which is both an online platform and a mobile app. We want to find out if using this type of digital technology can offer better long-term health benefits than traditional NHS face-to-face services. We'll also be exploring whether it makes it easier for people to access the support they need.

#### **Why is this important?**

Obesity affects more than a quarter of people in the UK and can lead to serious health complications. However, everyone's experience is different. That's why we want to understand how this digital pathway can improve care for people from different backgrounds, ages, and ethnicities. Right now, access to weight management services varies a lot across the country, so part of our study is about addressing these differences.

#### **What's the approach?**

While digital technology is already used in parts of the NHS, we need more evidence before it can be recommended for everyone. In this study, we'll be recruiting 450 participants who will either choose standard NHS care or use the digital technology. Over 18 to 24 months, we'll track outcomes like weight loss and time taken to access care, and we'll collect feedback through surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

#### **How can you be involved?**

We need patients and the public with lived experience of obesity to be part of the research team to make sure we get this right. By getting involved, you can use your own experiences and opinions to shape this important research and the technology to better meet real patient needs. Your voice will matter every step of the way. This is called

Patient and Public Involvement, and you can find out more about it at <https://www.peopleinresearch.org/public-involvement/>.

### **What will it involve?**

We'll aim to meet online using Microsoft Teams for up to 1 hour around once every 3 months to discuss the research project and hear your views. We want these sessions to be a space where we all learn from each other, make new friends, and enjoy the process. We will also ask your thoughts on the documents which will be giving to patients taking part in the study and how we can improve the technology.

### **What support will be available?**

We know that people might need different support to take part in projects like this. Before you get involved and throughout the project, we will check what help or support you might need. We are also able to reimburse reasonable expenses and offer payment for your contribution to the project.

### **The bigger picture!**

We hope this research will help shape future NHS policies, improving healthcare for people living with obesity. Our aim is to show how patient-centred digital technology can make a real difference to health outcomes.

If this sounds like something you'd like to be a part of, we'd love to hear from you!

**For more information, please email [PPI.W8Buddy@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:PPI.W8Buddy@uhcw.nhs.uk).**