

KNOWSLEY HEALTHIER WEIGHT STRATEGY

2025-2030



FOREWORDS



Councillor Christine Bannon
Cabinet Member for Health
Knowsley Council
Chair of Knowsley Health and Wellbeing Board

Being an unhealthy weight can have a huge impact on people's lives – if someone is overweight or obese, they are more at risk of developing illnesses such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, osteoarthritis, or having a diagnosed mental health problem such as depression or anxiety. Being overweight can mean that you live fewer years than people who are a healthy weight.

Eating too much or moving too little can contribute towards an individual becoming overweight but the root causes of obesity go much deeper than this. The wider environmental factors, such as where and how we live, what food is available and sold to us, and how we are encouraged to move more all have an impact. Other factors include how easy it is to exhibit healthier habits and social and economic factors all play a part in our health outcomes and can cause obesity.

Knowsley has historically had higher levels of children and adults who are living with overweight or obesity compared to the national average. There are many reasons for this, but we should not accept that this is the way it is. We must do something, and now is the time to act. Working together with our partners, and with our residents, taking a collaborative approach, is vitally important to be able to tackle the upstream drivers of obesity.

This Healthier Weight Strategy 2025-2030 outlines the Council's and our partners approach and commitments to improving healthy weight outcomes for our residents. Being a healthy weight can lead to people living healthy and fulfilling lives and this five-year strategy looks at short/medium to long term solutions that contribute to that vision.



Dr Senthil Senniappan MD FRCPCH MSc PhD
Consultant Paediatric Endocrinologist & Clinical Lead,
CEW Obesity Service
Alder Hey Children's Hospital
Honorary Associate Professor, University of Liverpool

We are seeing an increasing number of complications in children and young people living with obesity, ranging from diabetes mellitus, hypertension, and liver issues in addition to various mental health issues. These complications impair the quality of life and can impact on children and young people achieving their full academic potential and career prospects. Early help to tackle excessive weight gain would be the key to prevent the complications related to childhood obesity in the long-term.

It is reassuring to see the Healthier Weight Strategy for 2025-2030 proposed by Knowsley Council aims to bring together various stakeholders and organisations to tackle these health inequalities. The emphasis on promoting healthier choices by influencing the food environment in settings, services and places through a range of actions should tackle some of the societal and environmental factors contributing to the high number of children living with obesity. We are hopeful that this will go a long way in reducing the rates of overweight and obesity and related complications in children and young people.

**You can email any comments or queries regarding
this strategy to publichealth@knowsley.gov.uk**

INTRODUCTION

Tackling obesity is everyone's business – there is no one individual, group or organisation that can do this alone. We need a collaborative approach, with action at an individual, organisational, environmental and societal level – a whole systems approach. There are many different perspectives on what a whole systems approach is. However, for the purpose of this strategy, it is about how we respond to the complexities of obesity, enabling our partners and stakeholders, including local communities to come together, share an understanding of the reality of the challenge, and consider how our local system is currently operating.

In recent years living with overweight or obesity has become a norm along with dealing with weight stigma and weight bias, this is an important issue to be addressed. However, tackling this issue is not straightforward; there are many complex factors which contribute towards someone living with overweight or obesity.

This Healthier Weight Strategy for 2025-2030 sets out our ambitious long-term vision which is to ensure that **'Knowsley residents and their future generations are able to live longer, healthier lives by achieving and maintaining a healthy weight'**.

The strategy shifts more of the onus of responsibility from individuals, to addressing the environmental and societal factors which influence individual health – the wider determinants of health. However, to do this, we must create an environment that supports healthy choices, helps individuals to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and ensures making a healthier choice is the easier option.

Longer-term, the vision will contribute towards a reduction in health inequalities associated with weight and increase the number of adults and children at a healthy weight. However, it is well evidenced that ensuring children have the best start to life is key to them having positive physical and mental health outcomes throughout their life. With this in mind, this Healthier Weight Strategy will have a particular focus on ensuring that children establish healthy habits early on in life and continue these into adulthood.

Working towards achieving the strategy's vision, will require effective leadership, strong communication and visible partnership working across health, social care, education, voluntary and community sectors and other local authorities to share best practice and learning.

Accompanying this Healthier Weight Strategy is a high-level action plan which outlines defined actions agreed with partners to help us work collaboratively towards achieving our long-term vision, this can be found on pages 29-38.



Our ambitious long-term vision is that:

‘Knowsley residents and their future generations are able to live longer, healthier lives by achieving and maintaining a healthy weight’.

This long-term vision, will be achieved by focusing on a best start to life by ensuring that:

- All children starting in reception do so at a healthy weight
- No child will leave primary school classified as living with obesity

Longer term this approach will lead to improvements in the number of adults living with a healthy weight and a reduction in the health inequalities associated with weight.

This Healthier Weight Strategy will be a catalyst to improve outcomes in the short to medium term towards achieving our vision. By the end of the strategy delivery period - 2030, the following outcome measures will provide evidence of progress towards achieving the vision:

- A pause and reverse of the current trend of an increasing proportion of children living with overweight and obesity in reception
- A reduction in the proportion of children who become overweight or obese during primary school by year 6
- A reduction in the percentage of adults living with overweight and obesity

Priority areas for this Healthier Weight Strategy are:

1. Healthy Settings	To ensure our settings where residents learn, work, live and enjoy are positive environments; which create a supportive cultural norm where being healthy and active is what everyone does; providing healthier food choices and encouraging regular physical activity.
2. Healthy Services	To ensure all health and care services accessed by Knowsley residents are embedding the ethos of early intervention and prevention, specifically the promotion of healthy eating and movement, and making services available and accessible to all who need them.
3. Healthy Places	To influence and support planning design, and management of spaces and places to help promote good health, improve access to goods and services, and alleviate, or in some cases even prevent poor health thereby having a positive impact on reducing health inequalities.

These priority areas are outlined in more detail on pages 22 and 23 of this strategy.

TACKLING OBESITY

Obesity is complex with many different causes, these can be genetic, psychological, sociocultural, economic and environmental, it is not as simple as eating too much and moving too little. The evidence is now clear that the biggest factor influencing weight is the environments in which people live.

Research also shows that obesity affects some people more than others. This is not because they are different as individuals or lack motivation or willpower. It is because the conditions of their lives are different. The infographic below outlines some of the factors which influence weight.



Genetics and biological factors



Access to opportunities to be physically active



Income



Stigma



Cultural norms



Food prices



Portion sizes



Early years of life



Life experiences



Food availability



Mental Health



Food advertising and promotions



Financial insecurity



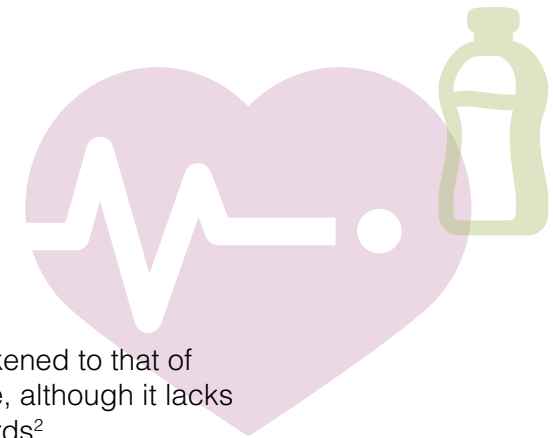
Access to treatment and support



Deprivation



Source: Obesity Health Alliance (2024)¹



Overweight or obesity at a population level

Living with overweight or obesity at a population level can be associated with a reduced life expectancy, an increased number of people living with long-term conditions and/or cancer diagnoses, being diagnosed with dementia, increased number of people having poor mental health and negative impacts to health and social care and the economy.

Overweight or obesity at an individual level

Living with overweight or obesity at an individual level can be associated with poor physical health, poor mental health driven by weight stigma and bias, less likely to be in employment, at increased risk of hospitalisation and a reduced life expectancy.

Addressing Weight Stigma

The rising rates of obesity have led to the emergence of harmful stereotypes and biases towards people who are living with obesity. Society has wrongly associated obesity with laziness, irresponsibility, and a lack of self-control. This perception persists despite the recognised influence of genetic, socioeconomic, and environmental factors in the development of obesity. These attitudes have fostered a damaging stigma, resulting in prejudice and discrimination against those affected. Addressing this issue requires dispelling misconceptions and creating an environment of empathy and support for individuals of all body sizes.

The prevalence of stigma has been likened to that of discrimination based on race and age, although it lacks comparable legal and social safeguards².

Weight stigma is associated with an increased risk of depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, and low self-esteem. There is a need for more compassionate and empathetic approaches as labeling an individual obese is unlikely to motivate weight loss, moreover it can reinforce the physical and psychological consequences for an individual and reduce confidence in their ability to lose weight. Children and young adults living with obesity often face weight-based bullying and discrimination, making living with obesity the most common cause of mistreatment for young people in school.

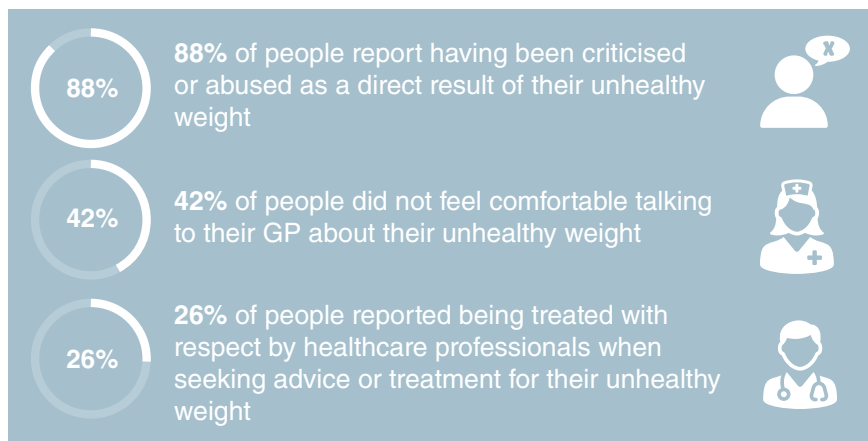
When talking about weight it is important to be mindful of the language used and to consider not only the biological factors but also the environmental influences. A more effective approach involves encouraging and supporting individuals to adopt a healthy lifestyle, emphasising components like a balanced diet, regular physical activity, sufficient sleep, and stress reduction³.

Alongside the impact on physical health, children and young people living with obesity may also experience poor mental health due to weight stigmatisation and bias. This can come from their peers, family members, those working in education and health and social care settings and the media. This results in further health inequalities due to school absences which can affect educational attainment, and avoidance of healthcare settings and asking for help and support. All of which will have a negative impact throughout their life.



The elimination of weight bias is a crucial part of the new Healthier Weight Strategy to establish equitable protection and create a more inclusive society that upholds the rights and dignity of individuals, regardless of their body size. This Healthier Weight Strategy describes how partners and communities will positively act to improve the environmental and societal factors that contribute to obesity through a collaborative approach.

This requires all partners who come into contact with residents taking a holistic view to health and wellbeing and understanding their role in relation to healthier weight. For example, understanding that for some people, making healthy choices is not high up on their priority list if they are dealing with substance misuse or have problems with debt. Partners will also need to be mindful of their choice of language and any actions or activities that may influence individuals' behaviour or choices.



World Obesity Federation⁴



Identified population priority needs

The following groups have been identified as having a high level of need for targeted interventions:

- Adults living with overweight and obesity among our vulnerable populations
- Children living with obesity at the start of primary school not currently being addressed
- People with low levels of physical activity
- People with low levels of literacy and health literacy therefore need easy to understand messages and easy self-referral route into support services
- Children with special educational needs
- People with physical disabilities
- People experiencing mental health issues
- People on a low income or experiencing food insecurity
- People with limited cooking skills or equipment
- Families with complex needs

REFLECTING ON THE 2018-24 HEALTHY WEIGHT PLAN

We should not move forward without reflecting on the previous healthy weight plan⁵ and its achievements. Notwithstanding where we are now post the COVID-19 pandemic, the plan underwent a light touch refresh in 2021 to accommodate the changed landscape and was extended for a further two years.

Despite the two years of the pandemic having an impact upon the delivery of the plan, many of the actions set out in the plan have been achieved and we have continued to provide a wide range of services both for prevention and intervention.

It is now timely to rethink our approach to how we move forward considering what we know about the current data, new challenges in the food environment and feedback from residents.

Some of the highlights include:

- Introduction of Council Healthier Advertising Policy
- Tighter restrictions on the numbers of new hot food takeaways in our shopping centres and local shopping parades
- Schools exploring Pledge for a Healthy and Active Future and Modeshift Stars
- Adoption of Health, Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young training programme (HENRY)
- Partners working better together e.g. delivery of weight loss Shapeshifters Programme (Livv Housing and Volair leisure)
- Engagement with Beyond Children & Young People Transformation Programme and accessing additional funding
- Improved uptake of Healthy Start Vouchers
- Delivery of task and finish group to improve the engagement during the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP)
- Produced localised versions of the NCMP videos and results letters for parents/carers
- Introduced bespoke Health Impact Assessment guidance and template for use in planning applications

UNDERSTANDING OBESITY – THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL PICTURE

In the UK, unhealthy diets account for 13% of all deaths⁶. Most of this is because a poor diet causes obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes, all of which can lead to cardiovascular diseases such as heart attacks and strokes.

What we eat can also increase our risk of some cancers, especially bowel cancer, which is linked to eating too much red or processed meat. Obesity is linked to many different cancers, including post-menopausal breast cancer and bowel cancer.

To understand healthy eating habits nationally and in Knowsley, there are several indicators which demonstrate patterns and trends to the type of foods being consumed. These are:

- Heart Health
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Obesity
- Dental Health in Children

In England, one in three people over the age of 45 has diabetes or a heart condition – both conditions are strongly associated

with dietary ill health. Deaths from all cardiovascular diseases in Knowsley is higher than regional and national averages for all persons.

The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) data⁸ is interrogated annually to identify any patterns and trends occurring.

In 2017/18, 83.5% of children who started reception living with obesity remained in this category in Year 6 in 2023/24.

50% of children who were in the overweight category in reception in 2017/18, moved to the obese category in Year 6 in 2023/24.

29% improved and moved to the healthy weight category and 21% remained at a healthy weight.

Around two thirds of those who were a healthy weight at reception (2017/18), maintained a healthy weight in Year 6 (2023/24).

Around a third worsened and moved to either overweight (14%) or obese category (17%).

This shows that best start to life is really important and through delivery of the Healthier Weight Strategy we will increase the number of children starting school at a healthy weight and reduce the number of children living with overweight or obesity at Year 6.

Most people do know that a healthy diet is key to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. In fact 80% of excess weight can be attributed to food or drink compared with 20% attributed to physical activity. As simple as this sounds, having a regular healthy diet can prove to be very challenging and compounded by opposing factors such as affordability, availability, appeal, cost of living, and ultra processed foods being a barrier to healthy eating. This is discussed further on page 16.

It is important to factor in the role alcohol, sugar sweetened/energy drinks can play in weight gain via the consumption of additional calories. Evidence⁷ supports the premise that alcohol-derived energy added to food intake would be predicted to promote weight gain. Alcohol has also been identified as a component cause of

more than 200 medical conditions of which liver cirrhosis, cancers and alcohol-related physical injury are most prevalent.

Unlike alcohol, the sugar sweetened/energy drinks are commonly consumed by both adults and children and without energy compensation (eg. decrease in food intake), high intake of such products would be expected to promote weight gain⁴. This information will form part of our key messages when communicating with residents for example; Making Every Contact Count.

Obesity in adults

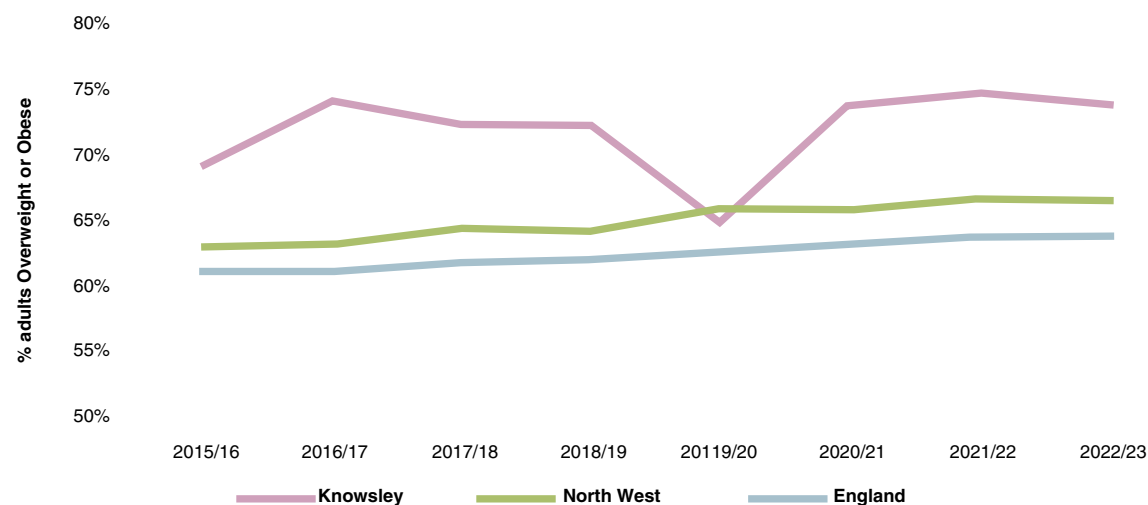
Latest figures⁹ show around a quarter (26.2%) of adults in England, or approximately 12 million people, have a body mass index (BMI) that indicates they are living with obesity. In England, the number of people living with obesity has risen steadily for the last 50 years.

In Knowsley:

- The number of adults classified as living with overweight or obesity is higher than the national average and has been for the past eight years of monitoring.
- The health inequality gap between Knowsley and elsewhere in England is increasing and rising faster than in other less deprived areas.
- The health inequality gap between the most and least deprived areas of the borough is also increasing as evidence shows fastest increases in overweight and obesity levels in the most deprived areas.



Figure 1
Percentage of adults (18+) classed as overweight or obese from 2015/16 to 2022/23¹⁰



Data shows that almost three quarters of Knowsley residents (73.9%) are classed as living with overweight or obesity. This is higher than the national average (64.0%) and regional average (66.5%). Trends indicate that the percentage of adults that are living with overweight or obesity are steadily increasing at local, regional, and national levels.

The high levels of obesity are a cause for concern in Knowsley as this puts our residents at a higher risk of obesity related health issues, pressure on the wider health and social care sector and impacts on the economy. Treating obesity-related illness costs the NHS at least £6.1billion each year with this predicted to rise to £9.7billion by 2050.



Understanding Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity is a serious medical condition that affects children and adolescents. It is particularly troubling as living with overweight or obesity at a young age can often lead to health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

Research found that, children and young people living with obesity are more likely to live with obesity as adults¹¹. In England in 2023/24, obesity in children in year 6 has decreased to 22.1%, from 22.7% in 2022/23. The long-term trend however is a gradual increase; in 2006/07 England had 17.5% of year 6 pupils who were living with obesity. This is also disproportionately affected by socio-economic factors with children in the most deprived 10% of households in England being over four times more likely to be living with severe obesity than the least deprived 10% of households in England.

Children and young people living with obesity may experience poorer mental health outcomes due to weight

stigmatisation from their peers, as well as teachers, family members, healthcare practitioners and the general public. This can result in school absences which can affect academic attainment, and avoidance of healthcare settings and support.

The main risk factors of childhood obesity are:

- **Unhealthy diet**
- **Lack of exercise**
- **Family and genetic factors** – If children come from a family of people living with overweight, they may be more likely to be a higher weight
- **Psychological factors** – Personal, parental, and family stress can increase a child's risk of living with obesity
- **Socioeconomic factors** – People in some communities have limited resources and limited access to affordable and nutritious food
- **Certain medications** – Some prescription drugs can increase the risk of developing obesity





The graphs demonstrate that Knowsley has consistently high rates of obesity in both Reception and Year 6 children.

The national child measurement programme (NCMP)[®] takes place annually, and measures the weight of children in Reception and again in Year 6. This enables monitoring of overweight and obesity levels in children across the borough and comparisons over time against; North West, England and national levels. With the exception of during the pandemic years.

Locally the majority of children are weighed and measured as part of the NCMP, with few parents/guardians opting out of the programme. This is positive as this enables an accurate understanding of current levels of overweight and obesity and understanding long-term trends.

Figure 2
Reception Obesity percentage (including severely obese) from 2006/07 to 2023/24

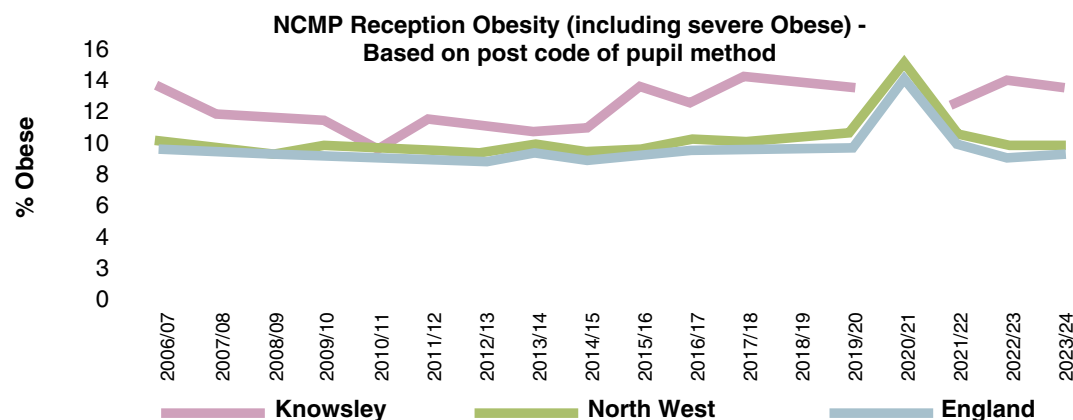
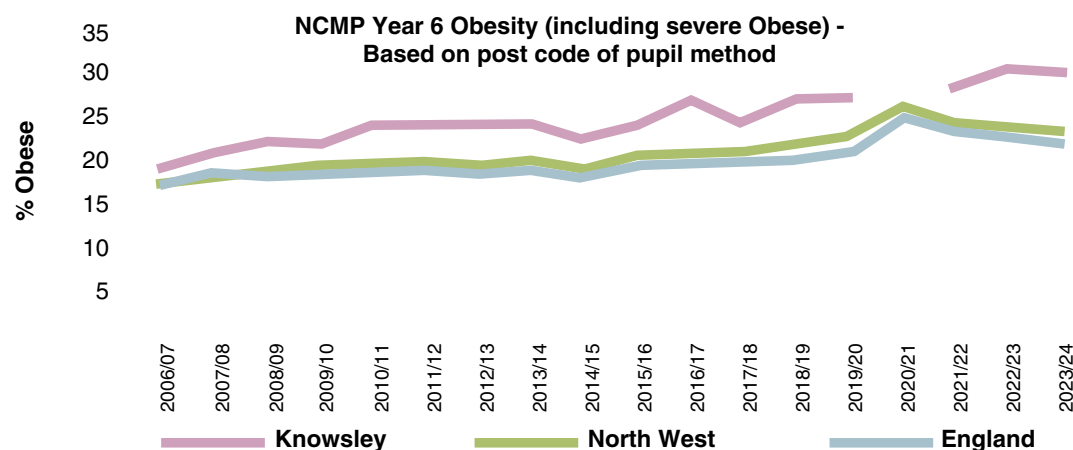


Figure 3
Year 6 Obesity percentage (including severely obese) from 2006/07 to 2023/24



OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY IN KNOWSLEY



Highest level of children

living with overweight and obesity at the end of primary school nationally

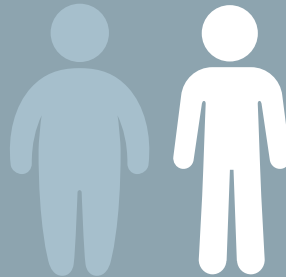


Childhood obesity levels in Knowsley has **increased** in recent years



Almost a third (28.8%)

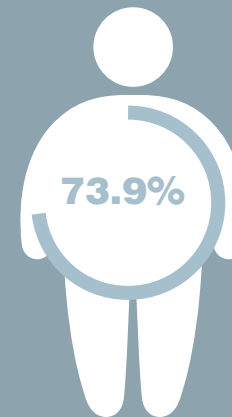
of children living with overweight and obesity in reception year



Almost

1 in 2

children are living with overweight and obesity at the end of primary school



7 in 10 adults (73.9%)

are living with overweight and obesity and **rising**





BARRIERS TO HEALTHY EATING IN KNOWSLEY

AFFORDABILITY

Affordability of a Healthy Diet

Research shows that the most deprived fifth of UK households need to spend around 50% of their disposable income to eat in line with the Eatwell Guide. With 25.1% of Knowsley's population being income deprived, affordability is a major barrier to healthy eating.



Cost of Healthy Food

It is estimated that healthy food costs nearly three times as much per calorie than less healthy foods. Fruit and vegetables remain the most expensive costing an average of £11.72 per 1,000Kcal compared to £5.82 for high in fat/sugar food and drinks.



COST OF LIVING

Food vs Fuel

Which? Index of priority places for food ranks Knowsley as second for having the highest proportion of priority places. This is based on factors including fuel poverty and supermarket accessibility. In a survey, 80% of Knowsley residents say they have been affected most by increasing costs of food and fuel.



AVAILABILITY

Availability of Places to Buy Food

It is estimated that 1 in 4 places to buy food are fast food outlets. This proportion is higher in deprived areas (31%). This can be seen in Knowsley where the highest concentrations of fast-food outlets are in the most deprived areas of the borough.



Availability of Low Sugar Options in Children's Food Categories

Only 7% of breakfast cereals and 8% of yogurts marketed to children are low in sugar.



FOOD DESERTS

A Food Desert is defined as 'an area containing two or fewer supermarkets/ convenience stores.'



Northwood

Knowsley is ranked 10th for food deserts in the UK with a key area being Northwood. Car ownership is a big factor in a food desert and 47% of households in Northwood have no car/van. There is also a lack of affordable supermarkets and instead there are small convenience shops that tend to be more expensive. This can lead to people unwillingly making unhealthy food choices.

APPEAL

Marketing of Baby and Toddler Snacks

97% of snacks marketed towards babies and toddlers feature a nutritional or health claim on the front of the packaging despite often being high in sugar for this age group.



Advertising Spend on Food

A third (33%) of advertising spend goes towards confectionery/soft drinks compared to 1% for fruit and veg. People in more deprived areas are more likely to be exposed to this advertising, making Knowsley residents particularly vulnerable.



ULTRA PROCESSED FOODS

Ultra processed foods often contain high levels of saturated fat, salt and sugar. They are on average three times cheaper per calories than healthier food. Knowsley residents can therefore be financially restricted to buying healthier, unprocessed foods.



STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

The development of this Healthier Weight Strategy included extensive stakeholder engagement during Summer/Autumn 2024. Residents, including parents/carers and professionals were consulted with to establish their thoughts and views on healthy weight through a series of surveys, focus groups and face to face activities.

Key Headlines:

- Many residents are benefitting from our commissioned services and seeing positive outcomes
- People aren't necessarily aware of our weight management/healthy lifestyle services/offer
- Living a healthy and happy life is extremely important to our residents
- Many find it difficult to make healthy choices and live an active lifestyle
- Key challenges affecting our families: fast food outlets, neurodiversity/special educational needs and disabilities, cost of healthy food
- People often feel “disheartened” about their weight and “guilty” about their food choices
- Many Teachers, Health Professionals and Social Prescribers don't feel it's their role to raise the issue or discuss weight

Survey responses included:

- Parents/residents – 94% agreed keeping a healthy weight was important to them and their family
- Education Providers – 46% noticed changes to a child's weight alongside other differences, for example:
 - Change in mood – being sad, irritable or angry
 - Low self-esteem and confidence
 - Withdrawn in class and from friends, less focused and changes in educational attainment
- School Catering Staff – 64% said they noticed a change to a child's weight as they grow



Healthier Weight Summit

A Knowsley Healthier Weight Summit was also held in October 2024 to reaffirm our commitment to reducing unhealthy weight for all residents over the next five years. The Summit brought together over 50 key stakeholders from the Council, Health, Social Care, Public and Voluntary Sector to discuss the healthier weight agenda and identify challenges, opportunities and make commitments.

All information from stakeholder activities has informed the priorities and helped to shape the content of this Healthier Weight Strategy and associated action plan.

Alongside the stakeholder engagement, there has been a review of the evidence and best practice on this agenda. Additionally, there has been a review of Knowsley commissioned lifestyle and weight management programmes to ascertain the reach, scope, effectiveness and value for money which has contributed to the direction of the strategy and will inform future commissioning.



Knowsley Better Together

The five outcomes outlined in the Knowsley 2030 Strategy¹³, along with the priorities outlined in the Knowsley Children and Families Plan¹⁴ and the Knowsley Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy¹⁵, underpins and aligns with this strategy's vision.

The implementation of the Knowsley Breastfeeding Strategy for 2025-2030¹⁶ and the introduction of a new sport and physical activity plan will support the delivery of this Healthier Weight Strategy.



FOCUS ON CHILDHOOD HEALTHIER WEIGHT

Healthmatters Deprivation and child obesity¹⁷

The **burden of obesity** is falling hardest on children from **low-income areas**



Obesity rates are **highest** for children from the **most deprived areas** and this is getting worse

Obesity prevalence of the **most deprived 10%** of children is approximately **2x** that of the **least deprived 10%**

The first 1000 days, that is the time before conception, during pregnancy and up to a child's second birthday, represent a critical part of childhood. It is when we see the most rapid phase of brain development and where the foundations are laid down for our future health and wellbeing.

Establishing healthy habits early in life gives babies and young children the best possible start and reduces their risk of poor physical and emotional health throughout childhood and into adulthood. Good nutrition is a key part of this development. Starting a family is a crucial milestone in anyone's life and a time in which most are keen to make positive changes in their and their families' lives.

However, not all parents experience the same starting point. We know that for some families the day-to-day challenges of life can make translating good intentions into action very difficult. This is particularly the case in areas where health inequalities are greatest and can impact on and limit the choices which are able to be made.



The importance of sustaining and maintaining good food and physical activity choices when our children start to grow and develop into toddlers and into school age is critical. We know that one in four of our children already start school living with overweight or obesity, which continues to increase throughout childhood.

Every parent wants their child to be healthy, but efforts to provide a healthy diet for their children are undermined by pervasive marketing of less healthy food and drink to children, which can influence preferences and result in them requesting these types of foods.

- **Pricing of less healthy food** compared to healthier options is also a key factor. Healthy foods are nearly three times more expensive calorie-for-calorie than less healthy foods. The poorest fifth of UK households would therefore need to spend 50% of their disposable income on food to follow the Government recommended healthy diet, compared to 11% for the richest fifth. It is challenging for parents to ensure their child has

access to a healthy diet, and the sole cause cannot be simply attributed to poor parenting

- **Maintaining healthy weight throughout our lives** can also provide significant challenges. We experience different triggers and drivers for our lifestyle behaviours and the way we perceive barriers or enablers to looking after our own health also varies from person to person. This is why support to empower people to become healthier in their decision making, leading to small but significant changes, needs to be tailored to an individual's personal values and context. This means support needs to be flexible and offer variety and choice for people to choose an approach which best suits their needs
- **To achieve a step-change for Knowsley**, we will focus on this critical period of development to ensure all children are well nourished and start school at a healthy weight. We will ensure new parents, carers and families receive the right support. We will utilise our existing infrastructure through Family Hubs and our health and care system,

and we will ensure staff are skilled and confident in providing the help parents need. We will target more help to the areas with greatest need and exploit available support for parents to help reduce the cost of eating healthily

- **Ensuring that health, care and other professionals engage in regular conversations** with patients about being a healthy weight can help to support behaviour change and awareness of nutrition. This is particularly the case if messages and approaches are consistent across professions and settings and are conducted at an early stage rather than left to be addressed when weight issues become more challenging and complex
- **A focus on prevention and early intervention** at the right time will help to support positive behaviour change with families. These approaches need to be designed with families at the centre to ensure we can support positive parenting and provide advice, information and support which is tailored to their needs

Through the strategy we will get upstream to tackle stubborn issues surrounding and even facilitating unhealthy weight for our population, in particular children.

While obesity can be understood as children having either too high a calorie intake or too little physical activity, these behaviours are largely a result of a child's environment, including both the physical environments they inhabit and the social and community environments around them. As a result, childhood obesity can be thought of as a "normal response to an abnormal environment".

- **The food environment** in addition to individual factors such as access to good quality cooking education, the food around children and young people plays an important role in levels of obesity. This includes the number of unhealthy food businesses (for example takeaways) as well as access to nutritious food (for example fruit and veg markets). Advertising and sponsorship also plays a significant role in people's food choices, such as sponsorship of kit for children's community football groups

- **The physical environment** what surrounds a child shapes their health: access to green and open space, opportunities for play and sport and active travel infrastructure
- **Social and community factors** the social and community environments around children can play a key role in levels of obesity. This could include the impact of different food and cooking cultures, the strength of community initiatives that encourage a healthy lifestyle as well as the experiences of different ethnic, religious and cultural communities
- **Economic factors** have a significant impact on obesity. Poverty and deprivation are significant risk factors for childhood obesity, with children living in the lowest income families two to three times more likely to experience obesity than those in the highest income families

- **Healthcare and Support Services** only play a relatively minor role in rates of childhood obesity, however appropriate pathways for identification and high-quality support for those who need it are still an important element of an effective response to childhood obesity

Tackling these "structural determinants" needs more than short-term, individual level interventions. Instead, longer term action is needed to shift these environments to support healthier lifestyles.



PRIORITY AREAS – HEALTHY SETTINGS, SERVICES AND PLACES

We must create an environment that supports healthy choices, helps individuals to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and ensures making a healthier choice is the easier option. With this in mind, this Healthier Weight Strategy has the following three priority areas:

1. Healthy Settings: To ensure our settings where residents learn, work, live and enjoy are positive environments; which create a supportive cultural norm where being healthy and active is what everyone does; providing healthier food choices and encouraging regular physical activity.

Examples include:

- Healthy school food environment (including nursery meals, packed lunches and breakfast and after school clubs)
- Healthy vending
- Affordable healthy food
- Breastfeeding friendly
- Increased opportunities for physical activity (play/activity space and resources and time, GP Active Practices)
- Healthy food choices in community groups and cafes in public spaces (including Holiday Activity Fund providers)

- Facilities to promote active travel and eating well (basic kitchen facilities in workplaces)

2. Healthy Services: To ensure all health and care services accessed by Knowsley residents are embedding the ethos of Early Intervention and Prevention, specifically the promotion of healthy eating and movement, and are making services available and accessible to all who need them.

Examples include:

- Healthy weight education programmes/activities
- Affordable physical activity programmes (cycling schemes, sports clubs, family play)
- Healthy weight campaigns and appropriate media content
- Infant feeding and breast-feeding programmes/services
- Making Every Contact Count to all frontline staff, and easy referral pathways



- National Child Measurement Programme – linked child/family interventions
- NHS Health Checks and National Diabetes Prevention Programme
- Weight management services (early intervention and support)

3. Healthy Places: To influence and support planning design, and management of spaces and places to help promote good health, improve access to goods and services, and alleviate, or in some cases even prevent, poor health thereby having a positive impact on reducing health inequalities.

Examples include:

- Policies and planning to address the food, physical, social and community, and economic environmental factor
- Restrictions on and engagement with unhealthy food businesses
- Increasing access to healthy food (addressing food deserts) and reducing food-related poverty
- Restricting exposure to advertising of unhealthy products
- Access to green and open spaces; sport and activity in safe and welcoming spaces
- Opportunities for active travel and recreation for all abilities



Knowsley residents and their future generations are able to live longer, healthier lives by achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.

DELIVERY AND PRINCIPLES

Long-term outlook:

Change takes time and we need to take a long-term approach to facilitate the change we need. Therefore this is a five year strategy but some actions will take even longer than this to make an long lasting impact. An annual milestone will be developed, and this will be reviewed, its impact assessed, and outcomes reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Taking a compassionate approach:

In this strategy overweight and obesity are used as clinical terms. We recognise that a person's weight is not the only indicator of how healthy an individual may be and there are a range of factors that contribute to good health and wellbeing. We will work to remove individual blame and create environments free from weight stigma to ensure everyone feels valued just the way they are.

Population Health:

We want to improve the health of all residents of Knowsley whilst focusing work to reduce the inequalities that exist. This supports Marmot's "Universal Proportionality" approach whereby the delivery of services is proportionate to the level of need.

Champion the role of communities:

Actions will be delivered by the community, building upon their strengths and understanding of the local area to develop solutions that will make the biggest impact.

Collaboration:

None of the aims or objectives will be achieved without the contributions of partners, organisations and agencies from across the Borough. We need to have the courage to come together to challenge organisational boundaries and try new approaches informed by the needs of communities.

All partners will be expected to prioritise and focus their local resources to ensure that investments are delivering in a sustainable way. This includes optimising current programmes and policies to support delivery.

A blend of nationally delivered programmes alongside a range of local, asset based approaches:

These will be underpinned by evidence and best practice, and will be long-term, sustained approaches and interventions.

Delivery to be supported by ongoing analysis and evaluation, to help partners to assess where progress is being made:

Evaluation of programmes will be ongoing and based on continuous improvement principles. If interventions are not cost effective or are making a limited or no impact they will be ceased and alternatives options considered.

Engagement and collaboration will be central themes in order to listen to all voices and build ownership and trust:

This will involve continuous engagement with key sectors and members of the public, ensuring inclusion of children, young people and families to explore and test how progress is being made, and to respond to views in an open and transparent way. Developing and identifying key leaders and advocates across all levels will help to drive local system leadership.

To drive the level of ambition we wish to see, we intend to support partners where applicable with a range of national/local resources to help inform and shape local thinking.

The strategy will be delivered in collaboration with the Council's Physical Activity Strategy, currently in development, which will have a focus on improving physical activity rates across all populations as well as a focus on increasing the number of community sporting activities/groups for example, children's football, park runs for adults and juniors.



RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

RISKS

There is a strong evidence regarding the negative implications of increasing numbers of people living with overweight or obesity, not just on an individual level but in relation to wider society. The main indicators relating to increasing risks are outlined below.

1. Increasing Health Inequalities

According to recent NHS data, obesity levels for children living in the most deprived areas, were more than double those living¹⁰ in the least deprived areas. The causes of these inequalities are linked to the social, economic and environmental factors in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. Reducing obesity related health inequalities will go some way to improving longer-term health outcomes.

2. Increasing costs to Health and Social Care

Recent data, suggests, in England, the NHS spends at least £5.1 billion a year dealing with ill health caused by overweight and obesity in England. This is projected to reach £9.7bn by 2050¹².

The Institute for Public Policy Research predict that excess weight amongst the current cohort of children will cost the NHS £74 billion over their lifespan¹⁸.

3. Increasing Economic Inactivity

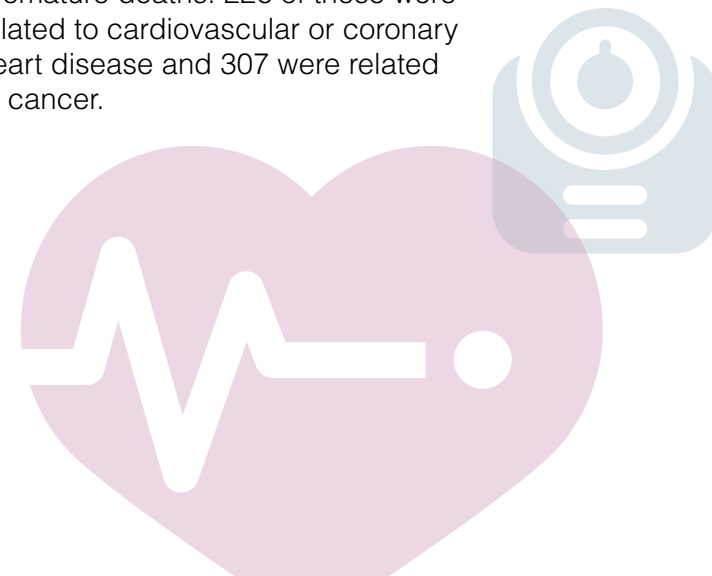
A healthy population is the foundation of a strong economy. People living with overweight or obesity are more likely to take extra sick days or leave the work force earlier due to health conditions affecting their ability to work. This then has an impact on labour supply and economic growth.

Recent analysis from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development¹⁹ found that the average UK tax bill is £500 per person per year more than if everyone was a healthy weight.

It is estimated that the total economic impact of obesity in 2023 in the UK was £98 billion. This accounts for costs to the NHS and social care, lost productivity, workforce inactivity and welfare payments.

4. Increasing number of premature deaths in people under 75 Years

The main illnesses which lead to early death in people under age 75 in Knowsley are; cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease. These are linked to modifiable risk factors such as high blood pressure, obesity, alcohol use and smoking. Knowsley data from 2018-2022 shows there were 674 premature deaths. 226 of these were related to cardiovascular or coronary heart disease and 307 were related to cancer.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

Adopting a whole systems approach to tackling rising levels of overweight or obesity will help to ensure healthier outcomes for all, ensuring opportunities to make the healthier choice is the easy option. These opportunities include:

1. Implementation of Healthier Weight Strategy for 2025-2030

To reduce associated health inequalities linked to living with overweight or obesity and in turn increasing the number of children and adults who are a healthy weight and thus improving longer-term health outcomes and reducing costs to health and social care and the wider economy.

2. Monitoring of Healthier Weight Strategy for 2025-30

To use a responsive approach to monitor on a quarterly basis any progress and any potential challenges which can be highlighted and addressed early on. Reporting back to the Healthier Weight Steering Group.

3. Establishment of a multi-agency Healthier Weight Steering Group

To take ownership of key actions, form effective partnerships and develop pathways to deliver more co-ordinated and joined-up services. This group will include partners from across children's and adults health and social care, primary care including integrated care boards, voluntary and community organisations and commissioned services.

4. Designated Healthy Weight Lead Officer

To be responsible to; move forward, monitor, review and oversee the delivery of the strategy, holding partners to account for their actions ensuring there is a coordinated borough wide approach to tackling unhealthy weight.

5. Maintain and harness community engagement

The valuable insight garnered through the extensive community engagement carried out in developing this Healthier Weight Strategy will help to ensure that any interventions are developed using a community-centred approach to ensure communities are empowered to improve their health.

6. Improve the promotion of signposting, referrals & self-referral routes to support services

To ensure people know how to access appropriate support to enable them to have control over their own health. Health and social care professionals are able to identify the most appropriate level of support or pathway to ensure people get the right support at the right time.

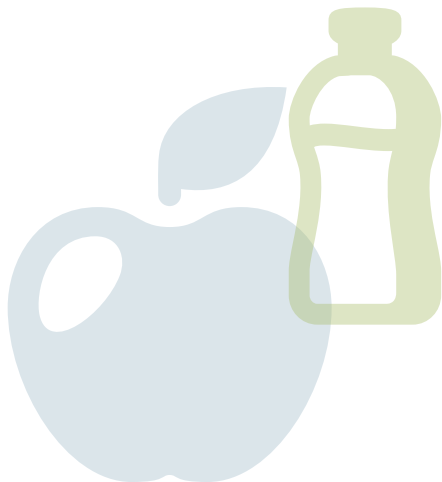
7. Continue to monitor and review all commissioned services

To ensure reach and scope to support continual service improvement and best practice.

MAKING IT HAPPEN – HIGH LEVEL ACTION PLAN

Underpinning this strategy is a high level action plan which can be found on pages 29-38. The action plan outlines SMART actions along with milestones and timescales agreed with lead partner organisations who will support the delivery of the strategy. For example; Knowsley Integrated Care Board, Children and Families Board.

These actions will be monitored via a milestone tracker and progress reported to the Healthier Weight Strategy Group which will reconvene to drive forward this strategy and action plan and where appropriate establish task and finish groups to progress key projects and address any challenges.



Healthier Weight Awareness Raising –

All partners continue to ensure healthy weight is on everybody's agenda and receiving due attention via:

- Regular briefings at key internal and partner meetings
- Governance of Healthier Weight Strategy by Health and Wellbeing Board with additional input from Children and Families
- Promotion of local and national campaigns related to healthy weight across the life course
- Re-adoption of the Local Authority Healthy Weight Declaration with a refresh of plans
- Partners adopting the Food Active Partner Pledge to the Local Authority Healthy Weight Declaration and making notable changes
- Regular meetings and effective engagement with the Healthier Weight Steering Group
- Links with the Physical Activity Plan for Knowsley
- Offer reducing weight stigma training to all frontline staff

High Level Outcomes

- Provision of sufficient and cost effective joined up weight management services
- Focus on prevention and early intervention of unhealthy weight throughout the life course across all agencies, ensuring residents get appropriate, timely support, are aware of support, self-referral routes, and pathways are transparent
- Maximising opportunities for healthy weight interventions and timely referrals into NHS and Primary Care for specialist support
- Improved partnership working to enhance/complement existing work ongoing in the Borough




ACTION PLAN

1. Healthy Settings

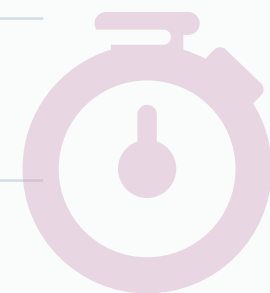
Focus: To ensure our settings where residents learn, work, live and enjoy are positive environments; which create a supportive cultural norm where being healthy and active is what everyone does; providing healthier food choices and encouraging regular physical activity

Actions	What we will do
Early Years	
Implement Healthy Early Years Knowsley Programme	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a programme in consultation with Children's Centres including Family Hubs, Private Voluntary or Independent (PVI) settings, childminders and in-school settings to adopt, that will mirror Knowsley's Healthy Schools Award Programme <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement programme and monitor outcomes and review
Deliver Early Years Oral Health	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Commission supervised toothbrushing programme to be offered in all nurseries <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement programme and monitor impact
Children's Centres/Family Hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Early Years Service are jointly working with Wirral Community Health Care 0-25 to achieve Breastfeeding Friendly accreditation
UNICEF Baby Friendly Accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Adopt an infant feeding policy that covers all the Baby Friendly best practice standardsComplete a Register IntentCertificate of CommitmentStage 1 AccreditationStage 2 AccreditationStage 3 Assessment



Actions	What we will do
Schools	
Implement Healthy Schools Knowsley Programme	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and roll out programme into primary schools across the borough • Evaluate impact and identify future funding if successful • Explore auto-enrolment for free school meals • Promotion of school meals and nutritious value • Understand breakfast/After School Club food provision especially in light of government commitment to provide funding for free breakfast clubs <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue offer and expand offer into secondary schools (funding permitting)
Further Education Offer	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Knowsley College to be a health promoting environment and an enabler • Create opportunities for apprenticeships within our healthier weight services <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce and facilitate sign up to Healthy Weight Declaration Partner Pledge
Youth Services	
Engagement with community and voluntary sector activities as well as Merseyside Youth Association & Young People	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people educated on commercial determinants and how companies target them (Bite Back campaign/ Give Up Loving Pop resources) • Develop young people Healthy Weight Champions <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and facilitate young people's forum on Healthier Lives
Leisure Centres	
Healthier food offer	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide healthier food options and signage of these • Explore option for fresh water freely available to visitors in centres foyers/atriums

Actions	What we will do
Leisure Centres continued	
Health Promoting Environments	<p>Medium/Long-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent activity of awareness raising and outreach • Intrinsic element of leisure centre environment and products – promote messaging in centre supported digitally
NHS Trusts/Primary Care	
Deliver GP Active Practice Charter	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase GP practice sign up of the Active Practice Charter • Consistent appropriate conversations about healthy lifestyles/referrals into Healthy Knowsley Service
Continue to improve offer and uptake of NHS Health Checks and further improve outcomes for healthier weight	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved and consistent promotion of NHS Health Checks/National Diabetes Prevention Programmes across all partners
Improve awareness and referrals into National Diabetes Prevention Programme (NDPP) from Primary Care	<p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out Making Every Contact Count training • Increase the number of referrals for weight management (including National Diabetes Prevention Programmes) and physical activity into lifestyle services e.g. from Pharmacy
<p>Engagement with Whiston Hospital (Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust) & Alder Hey Children's Hospital</p> <p>Buildings where health services operate (NHS Property Services, MerseyCare, PCRC)</p> <p>Pharmacy</p>	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish lead for staff health and wellbeing • Understand progress on health-related aspects of NHS Prevention Pledge • Work through pathways of referral from Alder Hey's Wellbeing Hub to local support services e.g. Social Prescribing solutions. • Engage with service leads to review the environments where community health services deliver e.g. Walk in Centres / Health Centres including (Stockbridge and Prescott not included) <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and understand Pharmacy role in health promotion activity and explore signing Food Active NHS Partner Pledge or adoption of the NHS Prevention Pledge



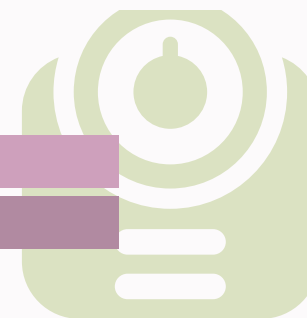
Actions	What we will do
Workplaces	
Working Well	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase capacity within the programme to recruit more businesses and improve offer <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once recruitment complete prioritise parts of the programme that have a healthy weight agenda including understanding of impact of food on the body, healthy vending and catering policies, Make Every Contact Count training. • Target efforts to workplaces where data shows workforce is more likely to experience food-related ill health • Facilitation of Active Travel to Work, including promotion and implementation of the 'Active Soles' Scheme (on agreement of funding) • Re-adoption of the Local Authority Healthy Weight Declaration and supporting others to sign the Partner Pledge
Council Community Buildings Including Libraries	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure where Council grants are used to provide food (e.g. Winter Wellness) there is a stipulation for healthy food provision • Work with leads to review the environments in these settings to ensure they seize the opportunity to be health promoting venues e.g. provide a range of information, activities and events to promote healthy and happier lives. • Provision of training (Make Every Contact Count / Why Weight to Talk) into the Voluntary Community Faith and Social Enterprise sector to help improve food offer in community activities and events



2. Healthy Services

Focus: To ensure all health and care services accessed by Knowsley residents are embedding the ethos of Early Intervention and Prevention, specifically the promotion of healthy eating and movement, and are making services available and accessible to all who need them

Actions	What we will do
Children and Young People	
National Child Measurement Programme local improvements	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation and dissemination of animated videos • Re-development of results letter following parent feedback <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review interventions offered following receipt of letter including take up of VIBE programme for Y6 children and consider whether additional support/services required
Deliver Health, Exercise, Nutrition, for the Really Young (HENRY) (0-5 years) Programme in Children's Centres	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve uptake of Health, Exercise, Nutrition, for the Really Young (HENRY) in Children Centres • Introduction of Healthy Families Workshops: Eating Well for Less, Let's Get Active, Fussy Eating, Healthy Teeth and Healthy Drinks • HENRY 0-5 Secure funding for an additional four facilitators (taking total to 9 within the Early Years Service) <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase numbers of trained practitioners and courses available • Monitor impact of HENRY • Explore scaling up of offer, review local success and outcomes and refine programme where possible to meet local need • Explore training of practitioners and delivery of next stage (5-11 years) and whether additional best practice available
HAF Programmes	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater promotion of Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) • Regular training of staff – including awareness of groups most likely to be living with unhealthy weight



Actions	What we will do
Children and Young People continued	
Beyond Programme Obesity and oral health Workstream	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploit opportunities for the Beyond programme to invest in Knowsley
Council	Medium-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If Beyond Programme continues then Knowsley organisations should continue to promote Knowsley as a place to carry out interventions and receive additional funding
Community Buildings Including Libraries	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners across Cheshire and Merseyside in developing a policy to support identifying if any safeguarding needs are required in relation to healthy weight • Training of Children's Services staff to talk about weight management and healthy lifestyles at every opportunity Medium-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop safeguarding procedure and thresholds (weight related threshold and level of need to be referred on) for referrals where children are experiencing obesity
Commissioned Services	
Full Review of Services Contributing to Healthy Weight	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all services including accessibility, referral routes, usage, value for money Medium-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve links between services so that the offer to residents is seamless • Improve referral routes into services i.e. self-referral, agency referral, GP referral • Treat residents as a name and not number when accessing services i.e. services work with residents asking for support regardless of weight status • New contracts to be aligned to healthy weight and delivering on recommendations from service review
Council Community Buildings Including Libraries	Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners across Cheshire and Merseyside in developing a policy to support identifying if any safeguarding needs are required in relation to healthy weight

Actions	What we will do
Commissioned Services continued	
Regular review of commissioned services to ensure meeting need and reducing inequalities	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services requested to report on reach into specific health inequality groups relevant to their service – those with greatest need and/or less likely to access services (e.g. children with Special Educational Needs, families from more deprived areas, ethnic minorities, males)
0-25 Services	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to play an important role in supporting children, young people and their families to make positive choices about their health, utilising opportunistic moments to discuss healthy weight and signpost/refer to weight management and healthy lifestyle programmes • Universal delivery of the Antenatal and 3-year+ health and development review • Continued Delivery of the VIBE programme and the Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Drop-In Service • To continue to create opportunities to engage with young people considering a career in health visiting, school nursing and weight management <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review uptake, reach and engagement of the 5 HCP contacts and well baby clinics, and if low consider options to increase uptake • Monitor performance and challenge exceptions to bring about service improvement • To support primary and secondary schools to promote and deliver positive body image workshops
Pregnancy Services	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve reach and engagement of pregnancy and post-natal physical activity programme (MamaFit) • Continue to train and upskill professionals in the Welcome to the World (WTTW) Training Programme • Improve antenatal offer across Knowsley (BAMBI's Breastfeeding Support Group, Building Attachment and Bonds Service (BABS), Women's Health and Maternity (WHaM)) <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More equitable support offer across Knowsley for pregnancy and post-natal • Obstetric healthier weight programme focusing on healthy diet in pregnancy



Actions	What we will do
Commissioned Services continued	
Infant feeding: Breastfeeding / Weaning	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce breastfeeding Personal Social Health Education lessons in primary and secondary schools • Review breastfeeding support services, identifying gaps and effectiveness. • To maintain positive feedback and engagement from HENRY Starting Solids Workshops <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To commission longer-term breast and infant feeding support services both on the hospital wards and in the community
Healthy Knowsley Service (HKS)	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design, develop and tender a new Healthy Knowsley Service with a greater emphasis on Healthy Weight especially with children and families <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor performance, best practice and challenge exceptions to bring about service improvement
Community Wellbeing programme (Volair)	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadening of targeted programmes for specific populations groups • Design, develop, deliver new programme for adults to improve physical activity and impact unhealthy weight <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor performance and challenge exceptions to bring about service improvement

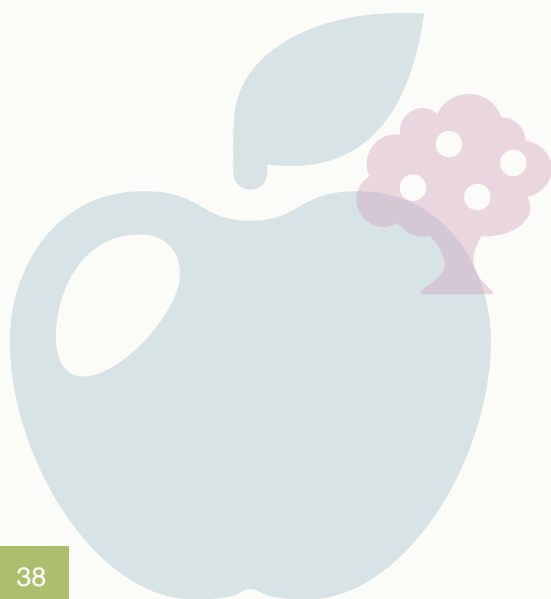


3. Healthy Places

Focus: To influence and support planning around, design, and management of spaces and places to help promote good health, improve access to goods and services, and alleviate, or in some cases even prevent, poor health thereby having a positive impact on reducing health inequalities

Actions	What we will do
Advertising	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review impact of healthier advertising policy adopted in 2024 and consider increasing restrictions to include all alcohol <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work towards healthy advertising policies for all advertising sites owned by partner organisations
Active Travel	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support schools to promote active travel through Healthy Schools Knowsley• Support businesses to promote active travel through Working Well• Ensure active travel is represented in development and regeneration plans <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make use of national and local monies to improve active travel infrastructure and promote routes through Knowsley
Food Security	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure food security plans include ambition to improve accessibility to good quality affordable food
Green Space	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved commissioned offer, and promotion of, to children and families <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximisation of green spaces by the local community including schools, commissioned services, community organisations and children's clubs

Actions	What we will do
Planning Policies	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement in the Health Equality Group / Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance Strategic Obesity Project workstream of food policy and planning <p>Medium-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Health engagement in the development of the new Local Plan to ensure that healthy environments, including food environments, are promoted throughout Where possible commitment to and engage in regional and national opportunities to shape planning policy re health promoting environments
Healthy Weight Declaration	<p>Short-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update healthy weight declaration for the Local Authority Promote Partner Pledge with key organisations



APPENDIX A

Performance Monitoring

A selection of national and local indicators will be used to demonstrate the impact of our Healthier Weight Strategy with regular assurance reporting to Knowsley Health and Wellbeing Board.

National Indicators

- Reception prevalence of overweight (including obesity)
2023/24 – 28.8%
- Year 6 prevalence of overweight (including obesity)
2023/24 – 45.5%
- Percentage of adults (aged 18 plus) classified as overweight or obese
2022/23 – 73.9%
- Percentage of physically active adults (aged 19 plus)
2022/23 – 60.7%
- Percentage of physically inactive adults (aged 19 plus)
2022/23 – 28.6%
- Percentage of adults (aged 16 plus) meeting the '5-a-day' fruit and vegetable
2022/23 – 24.5%
- Baby's first feed breastmilk
2020/21 – 45.3%
- Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks
2023/24 – 31.3%

Local Indicators

These indicators will performance measure actions and projects delivered under each priority area. The High Level Strategy will outline short/ medium and long term goals and an annual Milestone Action Tracker will performance measure progress of these goals across the lifetime of the Strategy.

Qualitative information will also be collected, for example case studies, to demonstrate impact that any of the actions have on our local residents alongside the sharing of best practice and learning. A clear focus is to reduce health inequalities so wherever possible we will monitor progress using this lens.



APPENDIX B

National Policy and Research

The Labour Government in Autumn 2024, set out its ambition to take action to address childhood obesity and will drive progress by implementing restrictions on the advertising of less healthy products on TV and online. The restrictions come into force on 1 October 2025 and include:

- Introducing a 9pm watershed for less healthy food and drink advertising on TV, including all on-demand programme services (ODPS) under the jurisdiction of the UK, and therefore regulated by Ofcom
- A restriction on paid-for less healthy food and drink advertising online, including non-Ofcom regulated ODPS, at all times

This is one part of the Governments Child Health Action Plan²⁰ to create the healthiest generation of children ever. It also includes: introducing breakfast clubs for all primary school children, banning the sale of dangerous highly

caffeinated energy drinks to under-16s and, to stop the targeting of school children by fast food outlets.

National guidance providing evidence-based recommendations on how to curb the rising tide of obesity is published by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)²¹ and will continue to be used to inform and plan local services.

Relevant guidance includes:

- Obesity: working with local communities (PH42)
- Weight management before, during and after pregnancy (PH27)
- Preventing type 2 diabetes – population and community interventions (PH35)
- BMI and waist circumference (PH46)
- Managing overweight and obese adults through lifestyle weight management services

- Managing overweight and obese children and young people through lifestyle weight management services (PH47)
- Behaviour change: individual approaches (PH49)
- Overweight and obesity management (NG246)

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) undertook a themed review in 2022²² to look at how local authorities could reduce obesity in the local area. The purpose of the review was to help and support local decision-making by ensuring investment decisions can be based on sound evidence, maximising the impact of stretched resources.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Obesity Health Alliance, 2024, [Turning the Tide Strategy - Obesity Health Alliance](#)
- ² Lancet, 2021, Pervasiveness, impact and implications of weight stigma [Pervasiveness, impact and implications of weight stigma](#)
- ³ Obesity, Stigma, and Discrimination, 2023, Melody Fulton; Sriharsha Dadana; Vijay N. Srinivasan. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK554571>
- ⁴ World Obesity Federation, [Weight Stigma | World Obesity Federation](#)
- ⁵ Knowsley Healthy Weight Plan 2018-2024, Knowsley Council.
- ⁶ Food Standards Agency, 2021, <https://www.food.gov.uk/our-work/chapter-1-the-nations-plate-our-diet-and-food-choices-today>
- ⁷ National Library of Medicine, 2015, [Beverage Consumption: Are Alcoholic and Sugary Drinks Tipping the Balance towards Overweight and Obesity? - PMC](#)
- ⁸ Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, 2024, [Obesity Profile - NCMP analysis reports | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)
- ⁹ Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, 2024, [Obesity Profile | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)
- ¹⁰ Active Lives Adult Survey, 2022-23 Report, [Active Lives | Sport England](#)
- ¹¹ Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, 2022, Childhood Obesity Applying All Our Health. [Childhood obesity: applying All Our Health - GOV.UK](#)
- ¹² Knowsley Healthy Eating Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2023, [Knowsley Knowledge | Knowsley Council](#)
- ¹³ Knowsley 2030 A long term strategy for [Knowsley. Current policies, plans and strategies | Knowsley Council](#)
- ¹⁴ Children and Families Plan 2021-2024 [Current policies, plans and strategies | Knowsley Council](#)
- ¹⁵ Knowsley Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025 [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025](#)
- ¹⁶ Knowsley Breastfeeding Strategy 2025-2030 [Current policies, plans and strategies | Knowsley Council](#)
- ¹⁷ Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, 2017, Health Matters Deprivation and Child Obesity, [Health matters: obesity and the food environment - GOV.UK](#)
- ¹⁸ The Institute for Public Policy Research, 2021, <https://www.ippr.org/media-office/revealed-childhood-obesity-is-twice-as-high-in-englands-most-deprived-places-than-in-affluent-areas>
- ¹⁹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2024, [Better policies for better lives | OECD](#)
- ²⁰ HM Government, 2024, Child Health Action Plan [Build an NHS fit for the future – The Labour Party](#)
- ²¹ National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), 2024, Obesity, [Find guidance | NICE](#)
- ²² National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), 2024, [Evidence and research findings for local authorities | NIHR](#)

