**Obesity Services**

**Goal setting...**

Have you ever made a New Year’s resolution? If so, what are your experiences of success and failures with New Year’s Resolutions? Think about what contributed to your being successful or what perhaps led to you not being successful and write these in the box below:

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<th>What contributed your successes?</th>
<th>What contributed to your previous failures?</th>
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**Question:** Having completed this activity, is there anything from your previous experiences that could help you with your weight loss attempt?

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Many people have unrealistic expectations of themselves which can then lead to failure, almost before they have started. Unrealistic goals will generate negative feelings and responses which could prevent future success. If you feel negative about something you have or have not done, examine the feelings and trace them back to the goals you set.
Making goals and reviewing them on a regular basis is a useful way of changing behaviour. We want you to focus now on goals around your behaviours associated with eating and activity habits.

**Effective goal setting**

Setting effective goals is an important way to maintain motivation when it comes to changing your behaviour. The goals you wish to set yourself are likely to be very personal to you. However, to ensure that your goal setting is effective, it is recommended that you consider the following actions when setting your goals and make sure they are **SMART** goals:

**Specific:** Just saying that “I will exercise more” is not helpful. Be as specific as possible with your goal setting, such as “I will walk for 20 minutes, three times a week”. When losing weight, try to focus on your eating and physical activity plans, instead of what the scales are saying.

**Measurable:** Monitor and keep records of your activity and eating via your food and activity diaries. Doing so will increase your awareness of certain habits/routines that you may wish to alter or eliminate.

**Achievable/Attitude:** Before setting any goals, it is important that you make them achievable and in line with your future realistic hopes. Be positive about the changes you wish to make and focus on the potential benefits from making these changes.

Loss of motivation can occur when too much attention is paid to the problems, barriers and difficulties to changing behaviour. Try to focus on finding solutions and ways to cope with these barriers and problems. During tough times, look back over the records you have kept and congratulate yourself on your progress so far. Start afresh and stay positive.

**Realistic:** Be realistic about what you want to achieve from attending the clinic, in line with your best hopes. Try not to set too many goals at once – three to five is realistic for most people, taking into account that each one can be a small step. Set reasonable targets and remember these will need to be adjusted from time to time as barriers outside of your control will influence your behaviour.

**Time Phased:** It is important that you give yourself a period of time in which to achieve this goal.

For example, a goal that is **NOT SMART** would be: I am going to lose weight in the New Year. However, a **SMART** goal would be: I am going to lose 3kg in four weeks by following a low fat diet and in order to do this, I will read all food labels and try not to eat anything that is greater than 3% fat per 100g.
By doing this, the goal is specific and measurable by the amount of weight loss and timely in that you are planning to do this within the four weeks. During your time in the obesity services, we will encourage you to set goals in order to get the best weight loss results.

**What would I like to be different about my life in regards to my weight?**

**What steps do you need to put in place in order to make your life different?**

Questions to ask yourself with some examples of answers:

- **The main reasons I want to change are:**
  to lower my cholesterol

- **The changes I am prepared to make are:**
  change to skimmed & semi-skimmed milk

- **The steps I will take to implement the change are:**
  change my online supermarket order, bring skimmed milk powder with me to work

- **I will start making the change:**
  tomorrow

- **I will ask for help from:**
  my partner

- **I will ask them to:**
  Praise me for making so much effort to change my diet
• **Situations that might make change difficult:**
  going out with friends

• **My plans for coping with difficult situations are:**
  practise saying no, warn friend

• **I will judge my success by:**
  my feeling better, more in control of my eating, eating healthier foods, reduction in cholesterol, weight loss

• **When I achieve the change, I will tell myself:**
  how well I am doing with my change plan

• **I will reward myself for being successful with:**
  some special bath oils

**Privacy & Dignity**
Same sex bays and bathrooms are offered in all wards except critical care and theatre recovery areas where the use of high-tech equipment and/or specialist one to one care is required.

We are now a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site.
For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

**Other formats:**
If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio, please ask the department where you are being treated, to contact the patient information team:
patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk.
Please note: We do not currently hold many leaflets in other languages; written translation requests are funded and agreed by the department who has authored the leaflet.

**Document history**
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