

# New obesity treatments and technology to save the NHS billions

- Obesity costs the NHS £6 billion annually, a figure which is expected to rise to over £9.7 billion each year by 2050
- Funding will fast-track treatments, enabling the NHS to reallocate the money to vital front line services

Cutting-edge obesity treatments and technologies which can help people shed 20% of their weight could soon be offered to NHS patients thanks to a £20 million research boost, the government has announced.

Obesity costs the NHS a massive £6 billion annually and this is set to rise to over £9.7 billion each year by 2050. The new investment, announced today, is expected to save the NHS billions over time and ensure that vital funds are spent on key frontline services.

The fund could lead to promising medicines and digital technologies being made available to patients, such as apps and online portals to encourage lifestyle changes, which have been shown in clinical trials to be safe and lead to a significant reduction in weight.

Health and Social Care Secretary Steve Barclay said:

Having a fit and healthy population is essential to reducing pressure on the NHS and supporting the economy with obesity, currently estimated to cost the NHS nearly £10 billion per year by 2050.

We are fast-tracking the most promising treatments and technologies to NHS patients to help them achieve a healthy weight, save the NHS billions of pounds and increase life expectancy.

We are determined to harness the full potential of innovative medical breakthroughs to level up the health of the nation.

An open competition will be run in early 2023 to identify sites to deliver this research, exploring how new and potentially transformative medicines can be combined with technologies such as digital tools to improve long-term health outcomes for people living with obesity. Research will be focused outside of London and the Greater South East, in the areas where obesity rates and health disparities are highest.

On Monday 28 November, the government will announce a Vaccine Taskforce approach to tackling some of the leading public health issues which damage the economy and drain NHS resources.

Four healthcare missions will be launched, covering obesity, cancer, mental

health and addiction to quickly develop and deliver new treatments, technology and support to patients to help them lead longer, healthier lives.

This builds upon the UK Life Sciences Vision published in July 2021 which sets out a 10-year strategy to harness the successes of the Covid response and accelerate the delivery of innovation to patients.