The Healthy Weight Pathway for School Nursing in the NHSCT in Northern Ireland (NI)

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The Healthy Weight Pathway for School Nursing was developed in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT) in Northern Ireland (NI), as a service improvement initiative targeting childhood obesity and overweight. It is a school nurse-led care pathway which represents the route through the school nursing service which is offered following identification of overweight and obesity at school health appraisals in Year 8.

In Northern Ireland, height and weight measurement is carried out during school health appraisals which are undertaken with all Year 1 and Year 8 pupils as a requirement of the regional Healthy Child, Healthy Future universal child health promotion programme (DHSSPS, 2010). Around 5000 school health appraisals are carried out in pupils aged 11/12 years in NHSCT every year. School nurses are, therefore, uniquely placed to address childhood obesity given their skill in clinical overview and the scope for individually tailored family based interventions.



What was the issue? Levels of clinical obesity in Year 8 pupils had almost doubled from 7.5% to 14% in three years between 2013-2016.

What prompted the work?

There was a need to improve how information was communicated to parents of pupils identified as overweight and obese. Practitioners wanted to improve family support for healthier lifestyle behaviors.

Initiating the work

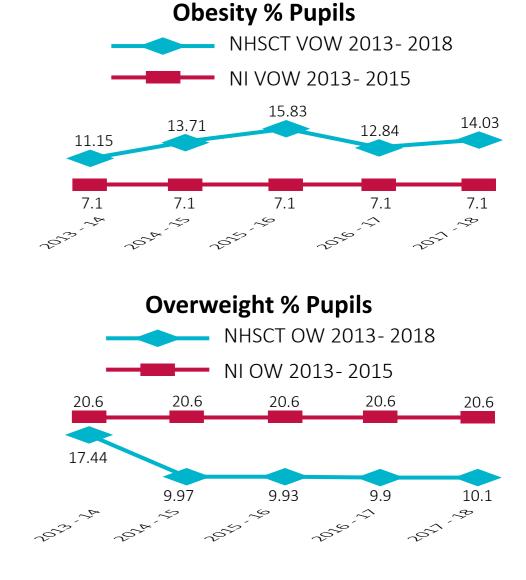
School nurses complete telephone contact to inform parents of the outcome of their child's school health appraisal and initiate discussion to increase knowledge and skills.

Guided conversation

Parents indicate how they would like to proceed with the information provided, whether self-care, or a school nurse-led health plan, with review at 3-6 months.

Health plan

Motivational tools, resources and local activities Families are supported to make lifestyle changes to maintain healthy weight and improve BMI over time.



Telephone contacts with parents/carers

68% achieved

832 parents

Was telephone discussion acceptable?

3.5% not accepted

Outcome of telephone discussion

79% self-care (660)

18% SN-led health plan with review (153)

Initial contact and guided conversation - "Mum was very concerned about her son's weight and says that it feels like fighting losing battle with fizzy drinks and junk food. We talked about how she could address the issue sensitively and agreed a health plan. Mum requested all pathway resources, telephone support and clinic review."

96.5% positive

Health plan reviews

54% achieved

66 pupils

4 month drop-in clinic- 'Attended

clinic today and has maintained

weight reduction. Son is very

aware of which foods to eat and

which to avoid. Discussed diet

and very healthy diet is taken.

Mum reports healthy breaks,

lunches and dinners at home

and she has stopped buying

sugary foods. Son has cut down

at home and now goes for

the healthy option'

Future Progran Healthy **NURSING ASSESSMENT** Review growth/development ge Calculate/plot RCPCH BMI centile range 00 Child, OVERWEIGHT/VERY OVERWEIGHT Sch BMI Centile 91st-99.6th Cause for concern identified Healthy rsal Univel **RAISE DISCUSSION** Consider outcome of discussion in pathway planning

YEAR 8 HEALTH APPRAISAL

Universal health and development review

Healthy Weight Pathway for School Nursing

Supporting overweight and very overweight young people in Year 8

Health Appraisal

Initiate nursing process. Health and development review with holistic assessment. Identify VOW/OW. Record review. Key considerations: puberty; ethnicity; endocrine conditions/co-morbidities; physical/neurodevelopmental disabilities; psychosocial distress; family/social factors; involvement of other agencies; safeguarding.

Raise Discussion

All children identified in BMI centile 91st-99.6th. Telephone contact to parents to discuss outcome of health appraisal. Use 'whole family' approach. Offer health promotion with links/resources. Offer follow-up/review.

Outcome of Discussion

✓ Parent declines further input. Provide contact details. Pupil remains open to SN service. Exit pathway at L1 ☑ Parent agrees SN led health plan. Lifestyle intervention goals and plan for review agreed. Progress pathway L2 ☑ Parent declines SN input at L1- requires referral at L2 exit pathway-remains open to SN service.

Did not attend or respond at 3-6 m review Make contact to close pathway

3-6 m review completed. Goals achieved. Encourage further progress and self-monitoring. Discuss and close pathway

Exit Pathway All young people remain open to SN service

Level 1 Raise Discussion

- Feedback from health appraisal with offer of health promotion and weblinks/resources Reinforce current recommendations for healthy
- eating/physical activity Use brief intervention/motivational skills
- to raise issue and assess readiness for change Consider outcome of discussion and plan to progress or exit pathway as above

Level 2 SN Led Health Plan

- •Telephone review at 3-6 months and/or offer of face-to-face intervention e.g home/clinic • Brief intervention/motivational
- skills to discuss issue and assess stage of change Enquire about health behaviours with practical
- suggestions and recommended motivational tools/resources •Support to set one or two achievable goals signpost local school and community activities

Level 1 or 2 Referral/Links

- Assess-plan-implement-evaluate outcomes
- Consider need for onward referral/links: Paediatric Dietician
- Community Paediatrics Medical Consultant •CAMHS •Safeguarding •Other
- School based support e.g pastoral care/counselling Local community/ leisure

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Outcomes

Outcomes focus on engagement, provision of information, supporting behaviour change and maintaining children's weight as they grow; as well as the role of qualified and skilled school nurses in supporting families to achieve this. This is in line with best practice UK guidelines for the development of lifestyle weight management services for children under 18 years (NICE, 2013; DoH, 2013).

The pathway's guided conversation has been pivotal in increasing the acceptability, awareness and engagement with families. The majority of parents had a positive attitude to the information and advice provided about their child's weight status.











