**Fresh Start Programme – Key Information for patients.**

1. **What should I expect when I join the Fresh Start Programme?**

Once you are referred to the Fresh Start Programme, you will be booked in for a clinical assessment prior to any treatment beginning; this is designed to help gain a thorough understanding of your current lifestyle, health & any difficulties caused by your weight. This session will also include a physical activity questionnaire to ensure that the exercise element of the programme is suitable for you to participate in.

* Follow the assessment, you will join a 6-month, online group programme. This includes fortnightly nutrition workshops and activity sessions led by our Nutritionist and Physical Activity Specialist.
* On alternate weeks you will receive our online health psychology course to work through at your own pace. This will help you to address any underlying behaviours or habits that may be making it harder to put dietary and physical activity recommendations in place.
* The group sessions will be followed by a further 6 months of ongoing support. This will include monthly drop-in sessions with our team of experts and may include additional 1:1 support from our Dietitian or Health Psychologist.

A small number of eligible patients may be able to receive weight loss medication through the Fresh Start programme. These patients will need to have an initial appointment with our nurse and follow up appointments before receiving each prescription.

1. **What is expected of me?**

To get the full benefits of the programme, it is important that you attend all the group sessions and put aside time to work through the psychology course on alternate weeks.

We understand that sometimes there may be unavoidable reasons why you cannot attend a session. If this happens, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

* Please note that if you miss three group sessions without contacting us, we will need to discharge you from the service.
* Please keep your camera on during the sessions so that we can make sure that you are exercising safely and everyone can benefit from the support of a group.
* We may ask you to complete tasks at home such as completing a food diary and setting weekly goals. We also ask you to keep a record of your weight for each session so that we can review and support you to reach your goals.

1. **Will you give me a diet plan?**

We do not give out set meal plans as every individual is different. However, we will help you to identify meaningful, realistic changes and set goals to put you in control of your weight loss journey.

1. **Do I need any equipment?**

All exercise sessions can be completed at home and you don’t need any equipment other than a chair if you wish to do seated exercise and a small amount of floor space.

We recommend that you wear comfortable clothing that is easy to move in, have a bottle of water and access to any medication that you may need, for example inhalers or pumps for Asthma or Angina.

We ask you to record your weight each month and send to us by email or verbally to our team, so it is useful to have a set of scales. If you don’t have scales at home, you may be able to weigh yourself at your GP surgery or pharmacy.

1. **Will I have to lose a certain amount of weight?**

We suggest that you aim to lose 5-10% of your starting weight on the tier 3 programme. This will enable you to lose weight at a healthy rate and achieve a level weight loss that will have a positive impact on your health.

1. **What about weight loss medication?**

We are now able to provide weight loss medication to a very small number of patients, however, there is a significant waiting list - please see the update statement in the ‘News’ section on our website for more details.

Please note that due to the large number of enquiries we receive, the team cannot at this time respond to individual emails requesting medication. However, we will contact eligible patients when medication becomes available.

You must have completed at least 80% of the Fresh Start group sessions or be able to commit to this when starting the programme to receive medication. You will also be expected to attend monthly drop-in sessions after the group programme and appointments with our nurse every 1-3 months.

**For patients who have completed the Fresh Start 12-month programme.**

If you have finished the 12-month programme, we can still add you to the waiting list for injections. You will be discharged until we can offer you medication, but this will not affect your waiting time and we will reopen your referral when you start the medication pathway.

You will not need to complete the intensive group programme again as long as you attended at least 80% of sessions, however, we will expect you to attend monthly drop-ins with our team and have appointments with our nurse.

If you were unable to attend 80% of the sessions, we may ask you to rejoin a group programme.

1. **What about bariatric surgery?**

Some patients may wish to explore this option. To be eligible, you will need to have attended at least 80% of the Tier 3 programme over 6 months if your BMI is over 50 or 12 months if your BMI is under 50.

We can complete a proforma that will allow your GP to refer you to the Tier 4 service for assessment. All tier 3 services can complete the proforma for this referral.