

Case study: Ian, 63

Context

Momenta Newcastle is delivering the NHS Low Calorie Diet (LCD) Programme across Birmingham and Solihull. The programme is delivered virtually over Zoom to groups of up to 15 people.

Ian's background and life before the programme

Ian lives with his wife Kathy in Birmingham. They've been married for 33 years, have a son and a daughter and recently became grandparents. Ian is an electrician who spent many years working in the army. However, he's not been able to work recently due to due to progressive immobility and pain from arthritis and spinal stenosis in his lower back and neck – with much needed surgery being delayed. With surgery now scheduled, he's looking forward to getting back to work and taking on a new role as a teacher at a local college training electrician apprentices.

Before starting on the NHS Low Calorie Diet Programme Ian weighed **118kg (18½ stone)** having progressively put on weight as his mobility got worse. Around May 2021 his blood tests indicated he had Type 2 diabetes which scared him because he'd recently lost a friend with diabetes complications.

*'It was a **shock** to be told, on top of all the illnesses I've got, that I was **also diabetic.**'*

Ian was depressed at that time, feeling helpless about his diabetes diagnosis until he realised that there was help available. His GP referred him to the NHS Low Calorie Programme explaining that it was now possible to *reverse* diabetes. Diabetes remission became Ian's goal when he started the 12 month programme in June 2021.



Ian's journey

When Ian started on the NHS Low Calorie Diet Programme, he describes being impressed and intrigued as he'd never given much thought to the effect of his food on his body and health. He found the programme simple to understand and follow and appreciated and valued the support from his Coach.

*'She puts you at **ease** and **knows exactly** what she's **talking** about.'*

Phase 1 – Total Diet Replacement (TDR)

*'The **first month** was the hardest.'*

Ian found the first two months on TDR the hardest because of the hunger he experienced and the significant change in his eating habits. Going to group meetings with others on the same journey was very helpful. Eventually, he was able to change his habits with the support of others in his group and his coach.

*'My **eyes were opened**, and I realised that I was eating all the **wrong stuff**.'*

At first Ian disliked the TDR products but, in the second month, he started liking the shakes and even looking forward to them. He ended up loving the banana and vanilla shakes as well as the orange and dark chocolate bar, which he recommends as *'tasting expensive and nutritious'*.

Ian's favourite way of making the shakes was to blend them with crushed ice rather than water to make a 'slush type' shake. He also preferred adding the fibre supplement to his shakes (1/4 spoon of fibre per shake) and drinking the extra water separately.

Phase 2 - Rebalance

Moving into the Food Reintroduction Phase 2, Ian learned how to choose healthier foods by using his *'Momenta in my Pocket'* (label reading guide) to examine food labels when he went food shopping with his wife. They started by making simple food swaps in their usual recipes to make them healthier, like using turkey mince instead of beef in a meatloaf, and they've continued to experiment with new foods and healthier recipes.

How did the programme fit into Ian's life?

Ian's group sessions were all online. While Zoom was a new experience, he quickly got used to the technology and appreciated being able to meet up with other participants whilst staying at home where he's comfortable.

During TDR, Ian chose not to eat with his wife and any family that might be visiting and admits that the cooking aromas around the house were the hardest thing to resist. But resist he did, with the support of his wife and the group and by making full use of his *Momenta Workbook*.

Christmas was very challenging for Ian as his family celebrates with plenty of food and traditional dishes that are often rich. However, he really enjoyed having a healthier approach to his Christmas dinner with turkey and fresh vegetables. Ian actually found that his whole family also embraced the healthier seasonal choices.

*'The **whole family's diet** has changed.'*



How has the program improved Ian's health and life?

Ian's experienced vast improvements in his health over the past year. He's lost **35kg (5½ stone) – 30%** of his starting weight. And he's achieved what he set out to do – diabetes remission!

*'I felt like I'd **won a gold medal** when I heard **I was in remission.**'*

He's more mentally alert, feels confident and is happier. Even walking up the stairs has become much easier, as he's no longer out of breath. Ian now eats a healthy diet and his tastes have changed. He has less sugar and doesn't want sweets any more. His wife bakes, but now uses healthier recipes.

At the beginning of the programme many of his favourite clothes didn't fit but, instead of throwing them away, he set a goal to fit back into his clothes and now he can wear them again.

*'My **weight is steady** ... I can now **get into all my old clothes.**'*



Conclusion

Ian has kept his *Workbook* with his session notes and uses them to reflect when he feels he needs support - he advises all participants to do this. His current goal is to get off painkillers and have the surgical procedures he needs to be more active and get back to work.

*'I'm **doing great** ... my blood sugar is always around 4.8mmol/l'*

Ian's confident that he'll never have diabetes again as eating healthily is now normal for him. He enjoys what he eats and looks at food in a completely different way now. Ian hopes future participants will commit to this programme and benefit from it as he did.

*'Give this course **your 100%** because if you don't you won't succeed and you'll feel worse for it. It's only time, and **time will pass very quickly.** Before you know it you'll be **out of the danger zone** and **start enjoying life.**'*

NOTE: The Momenta LCD programme has 20 group sessions and one individual phone-call in three phases over 12 months, including an initial 12 weeks of Total Diet Replacement (TDR) products including shakes, soups, bars and pot meals. Referred participants must meet NHSE eligibility criteria and comply with medication adjustment advice given by their GP at referral.