

Case study: Joanna



Context

Momenta Newcastle are delivering a group-based Diabetes Remission Programme (DRP) virtually over Zoom in Birmingham & Solihull CCG as part of the NHS England Low Calorie Diet Programme pilot.

Joanna's background

Joanna is 60 and lives with her husband. They have two sons. She has been a nurse since she was 18 and currently works in occupational health, so she has a very good understanding of diabetes and its side-effects.



Life before the programme

Joanna's first personal encounter with diabetes was 20 years when she suffered temporarily from gestational diabetes. She knew she was vulnerable to developing Type 2 diabetes and was diagnosed nearly 5 years ago. She was put on metformin and struggled to manage her weight.

*'I was in a **state of denial** and didn't want to **accept diabetes**'.*

Joanna was aware of the NHS Low Calorie Diet Programme and she approached her GP as soon as she could to get referred on to it.

Joanna's journey

*'It's **changed my life**'*

Joanna admits that being on the programme has *'taught me a lot of lessons'*. She has recently completed the 12 weeks of Total Diet Replacement (TDR) products and after losing 2½ stone is now totally committed to her new healthy lifestyle.

*'I'm looking at food **differently** now and **thinking about what I'm eating**'.*

With increasing confidence and determination to achieve her goals she has recently joined a gym. She is glad that the programme is 12 months long to support her through her lifestyle changes and sees the commitment as positive one - *'a journey and adventure'*.

*'This is a **life-long project** – I've got to keep doing this (eating **healthily** and **exercising**)'*

Phase 1 – Total Diet Replacement (TDR)

Before starting TDR Joanna was concerned that she might feel dizzy or ill, but she actually felt very well on the TDR products 'both physically and psychologically'.

*'All my **worries** were **unfounded**
– I wasn't dizzy or hungry'*

She lost weight steadily throughout the 12 weeks – never more than 2lbs a week, but she

*'gave it **100%**, spurred on by
thinking about the **rewards**'.*

Joanna really liked the Exante products and was pleasantly surprised that she felt well and didn't feel hungry. She particularly likes the shakes, her favourites being Lemon cheesecake 'like a dessert in a shake', White chocolate and raspberry, Chocolate orange and Strawberry and vanilla. She occasionally had Porridge for breakfast and a Dahl pot for an evening meal but mainly used shakes throughout.

Her top tip for thriving on the TDR products is to space the products evenly at four hourly intervals through the day. Joanna started each day with a shake at 8am and 700ml of water. She also stresses the importance of drinking plenty of water throughout the day and this became her daily treat:

*'I **treated myself** to my favourite
bottled water – it's the **little things**
that **get you through** the day'.*

Her starting weight was 89.9kg. During the TDR phase Joanna lost weight steadily, finishing the 12 weeks at **nearly 15kg or 2 ½ stone lighter** – having lost 16% of her starting body weight in just three months.

Phase 2

*'I'm **caring** more for myself
and **feel more energetic**.
It's **changed my life**'.*

Joanna is really in control of her transition off TDR but is finding it more challenging having to think about what to eat. She is finding the Workbook materials and other resources helpful 'I now realise how important portion sizes are for weight loss and a steady path' and is aware that she needs more healthy recipes and is making use of the Recipe book.

As well as finding the programme resources helpful she has valued the support of her Coach and her fellow group members who have made frequent use of a Whatsapp group to share ideas, tips and experiences.



How did the programme fit into Joanna's life?

'When I decide to do something I give it my all'.

Joanna is extremely motivated to achieve diabetes remission as she wants to avoid all the side-effects and complications – this has been and remains her focus. She has attended all the virtual group meetings, which she has really valued for support and convenience.

'My coach is amazing and really helpful'

Joanna is also well supported at home by her husband and family helping her to follow the TDR as advised. And, despite cooking each day for her husband, *'I haven't wanted to eat foods'*. Now she is in Phase 2 she is preparing simple, healthy meals to take into work each day.



How has the programme improved Joanna's health and life?

Joanna is feeling so much better and her recent diabetes review shows that she is progressing towards remission.

Joanna describes her gains as 'lifechanging':

- ♥ *'Not having heartburn or feeling bloated'*
- ♥ *'Feeling better in clothes and feeling positive'* –her mood is greatly improved
- ♥ *'Not having to take medications'* – she is now off all diabetes and cholesterol medication and her blood pressure medication has been significantly reduced.

Conclusion

Joanna is simply inspirational. She has made excellent progress on the programme but knows only too well that she has much to learn from her continued participation on the programme. Her current goals are to develop her cooking skills and increase her range of recipes and to exercise regularly and become fitter and stronger. She wants others to be able to benefit from the programme as much as she has.

NOTE: *The Momenta DRP 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.*