

Choose to Lose

Community Weight loss programme

***Guidelines for organisations and facilitators
to deliver the programme***



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Purpose of the guidelines

This document provides guidance for the organisation delivering *Choose to Lose*. It is intended to give an overview of the *Choose to Lose* programme and allow interested organisations to determine if the programme is suitable. It may also become a reference tool during the delivery of the programme to ensure expectations are being met.

What is the *Choose to Lose* programme?

Choose to Lose is a community-based, peer support, weight loss programme for adults, which is designed to be delivered in a group setting. It is designed to empower participants how to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and is free of charge. Successful weight management will result in reduction of long term health consequences including diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Choose to Lose phase 1 pilot was developed by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust Dietetic service in association with the Public Health Agency (PHA). It is delivered by people working within the community (facilitators) with on-going support from the *Choose to Lose* dietitian.

The programme has been adapted from the NHS Choices 12 Week Weight Loss Plan and adheres to the PHA's core service specifications for such programmes.

What *Choose to Lose* is not:

Choose to Lose is not a flexible programme and the materials are not to be adapted for different settings. Rather, *Choose to Lose* is to be delivered in its entirety without additional materials, except with prior permission from the *Choose to Lose* dietitian.

Choose to Lose is not be delivered without attending the mandatory facilitator training that is delivered via the *Choose to Lose* dietitian.

The *Choose to Lose* facilitator training is intended to provide facilitators with the necessary information and support to deliver the programme. It is not an opportunity for professional or personal development in isolation.

What is the format of *Choose to Lose*?

Format:

Choose to Lose consists of 12 weekly face-to-face sessions, delivered over 12 consecutive weeks where practical. Each session involves at least 75 minutes of combined nutrition education and physical activity.



Theory:

Each session includes 60 minutes discussion on diet, physical activity and behaviour change for weight loss. Lesson plans apply adult learning principles and behaviour change models and theories to promote active learning and application of learning.

Topics covered:

Week	Topics	Week	Topics
1	Benefits of weight loss Portion distortion Filling up on fibre	7	Non-food rewards Healthier dining out Balance on a budget
2	Calories Snacks Physical Activity	8	5 A DAY Eat Well Guide
3	Physical Activity Incidental activity Breakfast	9	Barriers to physical activity Treats and sweets
4	Healthy lunches Enjoying your food	10	Tips for diet success Comfort eating part 1 Recipe modification
5	Alcohol Sugary drinks	11	Non-food comfort fixes Comfort eating part 2 Calorie creep Muscle vs. fat
6	What's stopping you? Practise saying "no" Celebrate your success	12	Keeping the weight off SMART goals Getting the support you need

Behaviour change:

A key component of the programme is prompting the participants to choose specific diet or physical activity goals to focus on each week and reviewing progress. This prompts participants to translate their active learning into behaviour change.

Physical Activity:

A physical activity component is included in weeks 2-12 to encourage initiation or maintenance of regular physical activity. Examples of physical activities that can be carried out include:

- 15 minute walk with appropriately qualified walk leader
- Group physical activity led by an appropriately qualified physical activity leader, e.g.:
 - Chair based exercise
 - Gentle resistance exercise (e.g. using resistance bands)
 - Gentle aerobic exercise (e.g. indoor walking circuit)
 - NHS Stretch and Flex exercises

Physical activity must be led by an appropriately qualified trainer, either the *Choose to Lose* facilitator or an external physical activity leader. It is the responsibility of the organisation delivering *Choose to Lose* to check qualifications and consider implications for insurance and public liability. Ask the *Choose to Lose* dietitian for details of walk leader training days.



Monitoring and evaluation:

The facilitator will be expected to measure participants' weights each week as a part of their weekly "check in" to promote self-monitoring of progress and to contribute to programme evaluation. In addition, data is collected for a regional evaluation of the programme. Questionnaires are administered at week one and 12. All data needs to be returned promptly to the Public Health Agency for collation and analysis.

Who is *Choose to Lose* suitable for?

Choose to Lose is suitable for adults in the community, who are above a healthy weight (as defined by having a body mass index (BMI) of 25 Kg/m² or over) and who are motivated to change their diet, exercise and/or lifestyle in order to lose weight.

It is important that *Choose to Lose* facilitators advise potential participants who have any medical condition to consult with their GP before commencing the programme.

Participants should consider their individual suitability for the physical activity component of *Choose to Lose* as this will vary.

It is recommended the programme has 6-9 participants per group and groups should have a minimum of 4 regular participants.

Who is *Choose to Lose* not suitable for?

Choose to Lose is not suitable for people with a BMI under 25 Kg/m², children, pregnant or breastfeeding women, frail elderly and those who have recently unintentionally lost weight.

Choose to Lose does not address the nutritional needs of people requiring specific therapeutic diets, although they may benefit from attending. Such participants should ask their GP to refer them to a Registered Dietitian if they require further dietary advice.

Choose to Lose does not address the needs of people with learning disabilities and they may be advised of other more suitable programmes.

What is the role of the *Choose to Lose* dietitian?

The *Choose to Lose* Registered Dietitian is responsible for:

- Supporting, training and providing guidance for facilitators and organisations delivering *Choose to Lose*
- Updating *Choose to Lose* lesson plans and materials
- Providing support to facilitators in answering nutritional queries as they arise
- Directing participants and facilitators to appropriate further health advice or assistance
- Visiting *Choose to Lose* sessions at least once over the 12 week programme. This visit will provide support for the facilitator and enable monitoring of the programme. The facilitator is required to notify the dietitian when the programme is being delivered to agree a date to visit. Please note this visit is compulsory for governance reasons.



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Who are the *Choose to Lose* facilitators?

Choose to Lose facilitators are mostly recruited from community sectors.

The programme is designed to be delivered by one facilitator. It is recommended that each organisation can have a maximum of two facilitators trained.

What are the prior requirement criteria for *Choose to Lose* facilitators?

Group facilitators should:

- Work with groups who would benefit from *Choose to Lose*
- Have group facilitation skills
- Have a reasonable standard of literacy
- Have an interest in nutrition, physical activity and weight management

Any organisation planning to deliver *Choose to Lose*, must ensure the facilitator has completed *Choose to Lose* facilitator training.

What is expected of *Choose to Lose* facilitators?

As per facilitator's declaration, it is expected that *Choose to Lose* facilitators will:

- Read the *Choose to Lose* Guidelines.
- Ensure that the necessary resources and facilities are utilised for the delivery of *Choose to Lose*.
- Attend 2 days facilitator training, additional 1 day walk leader training (if necessary) and at least one annual update session.
- Deliver one full 12 week *Choose to Lose* programme, as outlined in the manual, within six months of completing the facilitator training. If the facilitator fails to deliver a *Choose to Lose* programme within 2 years and has not attended any updates offered the *Choose to Lose* manual and materials will be removed.
- Ensure a physical activity session is delivered at each week.
- Not share *Choose to Lose* materials with non-participants without prior written permission from the *Choose to Lose* dietitian.
- Not provide individualised nutrition advice to *Choose to Lose* participants except with under guidance of the *Choose to Lose* dietitian.
- Take part in the evaluation of *Choose to Lose*.
- Maintain regular communication with the *Choose to Lose* dietitian. The facilitator is required to notify the dietitian when a programme is being delivered. The dietitian will monitor the *Choose to Lose* programmes being delivered and be a point of contact for facilitator queries.



What is the time commitment for *Choose to Lose* facilitators?

The average weekly time commitment is 4 hours. Below is an estimate of time required. Please note that the time required to prepare for sessions will vary depending on the facilitator's familiarity with the topic and the *Choose to Lose* learning activity, the facilitator's group facilitation skills, purchases required and amount of printing required. It is expected that as familiarity with the programme develops, facilitators will require less time dedicated to preparation.

Programme phase	Time required	
Facilitator training	Initial training	2 days (each 9.30am – 5pm)
	If necessary: walk leader training	1 day (9.30am – 5pm)
	Annual update sessions	½ day
Recruitment	Varies – facilitator should be in prior contact with eligible persons	
Weekly preparation	2 hours	
Weekly session	Setup room	15 minutes
	Theory	1 hour
	Exercise	15 minutes
	Packing up	15 minutes
	Total	1 hour, 45 minutes
Weekly reporting	15 minutes email or phone communication with team	

What resources are required for the programme?

- Access to a room large enough to facilitate group education and physical activity.
- Flip chart or whiteboard, marker pens, pens for participants
- Access to printer – including colour printing at times
- First aid kit

What costs are associated with *Choose to Lose*?

The organisation delivering *Choose to Lose* is responsible for funding the programme. The *Choose to Lose* dietitian and the Health and Social Care Trust are not responsible for funding the programme.

Participants of *Choose to Lose* should not be charged for the service.

Choose to Lose facilitators delivering the programme for their employing organisation do so as part of their work – paid or voluntary.



Summary of estimated costs to deliver Choose to Lose:

Item	Estimated cost
Printing / photocopying of NHS Choices 12 week plan (50 pages full colour). One copy required per participant per programme	Costs will vary depending on organisation source
Printing / photocopying worksheets. (approx. 50 pages colour or black and white). One set of worksheets required per participant per programme	Costs will vary depending on organisation source
Printing / photocopying additional information for facilitator (approx. 100 pages colour or black and white). One set per facilitator as one off requirement	Costs will vary depending on organisation source
Electronic Portable Scales	Average cost £60
Equipment – flipchart, markers, pens	£20
Additional materials for session activities, e.g. food displays / demos	£20

What are the insurance issues?

Insurance for the building: The venue in which *Choose to Lose* is held must be covered by public liability insurance and *Choose to Lose* should be listed on the insurance as one of the activities which takes place in the venue.

Insurance for facilitators: Facilitators delivering *Choose to Lose* as part of their work duties must be covered by the employing organisation's insurance. Organisations are advised therefore to inform their insurers that they are providing the *Choose to Lose* programme as part of their activities. Volunteers who deliver *Choose to Lose* for an organisation should be similarly covered by the organisation's insurance.

Organisations wishing to bring in a community facilitator to deliver *Choose to Lose* should ensure that the facilitator is insured before delivery commences. Community facilitators are advised to take out their own insurance.



What are the considerations for the manager?

As per manager's declaration, managers should:

- Read and understand the *Choose to Lose* Guidelines.
- Ensure that the necessary resources and facilities are available for the programme.
- Allow named applicant to attend 2 days facilitator training, additional 1 day walk leader training (if necessary) and at least one annual update session.
- Ensure at least one *Choose to Lose* programme is delivered by the named applicant within six months of attending the facilitator training.
- Ensure a physical activity session is delivered before or after the *Choose to Lose* programme.
- Ensure the insurance for the organisation and the venue is appropriate.
- Understand the *Choose to Lose* dietitian will carry out at least one compulsory visit during programme delivery for support and monitoring purposes.
- Understand that the programme is free of charge for all participants.

***Choose to Lose* facilitator registration process**

1. Prospective facilitator and their manager (as appropriate) to read the *Choose to Lose* Guidelines and consider suitability.
2. Contact the *Choose to Lose* dietitian to discuss suitability of training.
3. Facilitator and manager (as appropriate) to complete and sign application forms.
4. Prospective facilitator to attend two day training course and, if necessary, 1day walk leader training.

