

WellFed information sheet

This information is about WellFed 'free veg on prescription' pilots.

WellFed pilots (or trials) are for people who:

- have type 2 diabetes or
- have pre-diabetes, also known as 'non-diabetic hyperglycaemia'. This is when you are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

WellFed started when a Cornwall GP 'prescribed' free healthy vegetable boxes for her patients with type 2 diabetes. Using the vegetables helped these patients reduce or reverse their diabetes. For some, it worked better than taking diabetes medicine. It improved their physical health and how they felt in themselves.



To find out whether this could help more people, we are running some more pilots. You could take part in a pilot with Helston Medical Centre, Cober Valley Surgery and [POM Cornwall](#).

What's involved in a WellFed pilot?

- Every week for 12 weeks, you'll get a FREE bag of vegetables. The vegetables are grown locally and organically.
- You'll be offered free help with how to use your veg. There will be simple, friendly cookery and tasting sessions held at the Old Cattle Market (where you'll collect your veg) and easy recipe ideas.
- There will also be opportunities to take part in other activities at POM Cornwall and in the local area. The activities are all free and could help improve your health and wellbeing. They are optional - you don't have to take part.
- Before you start getting your veg box, we'll ask you some questions about how you feel in yourself, and about your health and wellbeing. We'll ask these questions again at the end of 12-week trial. The person asking you the questions might be a health coach, social prescriber, nurse, community health and wellbeing worker or a member of the WellFed team. They will record your answers but not your name, so the researcher looking at the information won't know who you are. (Your answers are anonymous.) You won't have to answer any questions you don't want to.
- We'll also ask your permission for your GP surgery to share some information with us, before and after the pilot. This will be your HbA1C level, blood pressure, cholesterol, weight and BMI. Our researcher will only see a summary from a group of people taking part in WellFed and won't know your name or who you are. We look at this to understand whether having a veg box and cooking support leads to improvements in your physical health that we can measure.

Why is the trial happening?

More and more people are getting type 2 diabetes. It can make people very unwell. It puts pressure on the NHS by increasing the need for medicines, GP and hospital appointments and operations. But it can be prevented.

Eating more healthily and being more physically active can prevent and reverse type 2 diabetes. A prescription of healthy veg and support to use it could be a better (and nicer) way of treating or stopping diabetes than medicine for some people. But to make it available to more people, we need analyse how well it works. And we need to ask people who try it what they think.

Who can join the trial?

If you have type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes you could join WellFed.

We will need to talk to your GP or diabetes nurse and they will look at your most recent diabetes blood test. The blood test tells us your HbA1c level. This is how much glucose (sugar) is in your blood. People with HbA1c of 42-75 mmol/mol can join WellFed. (Don't worry if you don't know. We can help you find out or find out for you.)

You'll need to be willing to take part in the research and to try out a free veg box for 12 weeks. Of course you can change your mind at any time.

What can you expect?

Once you've decided to take part, we'll invite you to a WellFed welcome session. You'll usually get your first free veg box there. If you want to, you can bring someone with you for support.

At the WellFed welcome you'll meet other people taking part in the pilot.

You'll learn how to make simple, tasty and healthy meals using the veg that are in your bag each week. You won't need fancy ingredients or equipment. The meals will be cheap to make. And it's not like being in a classroom! The idea is to build cooking confidence and skill by having a go, with other people. It's a friendly, inclusive and practical approach. After making a meal together, you'll share a delicious lunch. You'll use the veg in your veg bag at home.



WellFed welcome and cooking sessions, mid Cornwall

Depending on where you take part in WellFed, there could be other activities on offer. These might include gardening or learning about food growing. All activities are optional and can suit different levels of fitness and ability. You won't have to take part in anything you don't want to. Changing your mind is OK too!

"I'm cooking from scratch and eating more healthily. It's made me love my food even more. Some of the veg I've never seen before and had to google!"

It's been great being part of a team and has really improved my mental health. I just feel I fit. It's made me look at the environment and what I'm eating. I always leave feeling positive!"

WellFed Participant, mid Cornwall

About POM Cornwall

POM is the family-run organic market garden that will supply your veg bag. They'll grow most of the nutrient-rich veg in your bag on a beautiful farm near Ruan Minor, using a nature-friendly 'no-dig' approach. They will source some veg from other local growers.

Mark and Bina are the team behind POM – growing, cooking and sharing food that's rooted in care, community and Cornwall.

Mark does most of the growing. He'll lead the informal cookery sessions at the Old Cattle Market and host some additional workshops at the market garden. Bina brings the colour. She's always in the kitchen, creating vibrant food that warms the soul. She'll be supporting Mark to deliver WellFed.

<https://healthandclimate.org.uk/projects/wellfed/> ClaireJ@volunteercornwall.org.uk