

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

Digital self-help for people with eating disorders: early value assessment

Equality impact assessment: Scoping

1. Have any potential equality issues been identified during the scoping process?

Potential equality issues were discussed in the scoping workshop 1 April 2025.

The following were identified as potential equality issues relating to the condition:

- Eating disorders are more commonly diagnosed in people who are younger, female and from a white ethnic group
- People who are older or from minority ethnic backgrounds, or do not identify as women may find it difficult to seek help for an eating disorder, or the eating disorder may not be appropriately recognised or diagnosed because of reduced awareness of eating disorders in these groups
- People with neurodiverse conditions may be at a greater risk for developing eating disorders
- Binge eating disorder can cause weight gain and this may lead to other health conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

The following were identified as potential equality issues relating to the technologies:

Some people may particularly benefit from having access to digital self-help programmes, for example:

- People with less severe eating disorders who may otherwise wait longer for treatment when treatment of more severe eating disorders are prioritised because of limited capacity
- People who live in geographical areas with less available specialist eating disorder service capacity
- Some children and young people may have increased engagement with self-help treatment in an interactive digital format than with book in a printed or electronic format
- Some children and young people may not have the family or carer support to ensure they attend supportive sessions during therapy.

Some people may find it more difficult or may not be able to use the digital self-help programmes, for example:

- People with neurodiverse conditions
- People with a learning disability
- People with a visual, hearing or cognitive impairment
- People with problems with manual dexterity
- People who are less used to using digital technologies in general
- People who do not have access or private access to smart phone, tablet or a computer or internet (if internet is needed).

If digital self-help programmes are designed with young women from white ethnic groups in mind, others, for example people who don't identify as women, people who are older or from a different ethnic background may feel the therapy tool is not targeted to them and find it harder to engage with the therapy.

2. What is the preliminary view as to what extent these potential equality issues need addressing by the committee?

The committee should consider all the equality issues when making recommendations.

3. Has any change to the draft scope been agreed to highlight potential equality issues?

Potential equality issues and considerations have been included in section 8 of the final scope. The following have also been included as subgroups:

- Children and young people; adults
- People who may find it more difficult to use digital self-help technologies (for example people with neurodiverse conditions, learning disability, visual, hearing or cognitive impairment or problems with manual dexterity, or who are less used to using digital technologies in general)

- 4.** Have any additional stakeholders related to potential equality issues been identified during the scoping process, and, if so, have changes to the stakeholder list been made?

No additional stakeholders related to potential equality issues were identified during the scoping process.

Approved by Associate Director: Lizzy Latimer

Date: 09/04/2025