# Northern Ireland prepares to launch new Regional Obesity Management Service with public consultation



Health Minister Mike Nesbitt recently shared his enthusiasm for the launch of the Regional Obesity Management Service (ROMS), which is poised to be introduced in Northern Ireland over the coming months. During his announcement, he outlined the complexities associated with managing obesity and reiterated the lasting commitment required for comprehensive healthcare solutions in this area.

Nesbitt highlighted emerging treatments for obesity, particularly advancements in weight-loss medications. He stated, “We are looking at huge developments in this area,” acknowledging the potential of these new drugs to facilitate significant weight loss. However, he cautioned against a common pitfall: individuals who achieve rapid weight loss through medication risk regaining that weight once treatment ceases. This emphasises the necessity for continual support and long-term strategies in dealing with obesity.

The ROMS aims to deliver specialised clinical support both in community settings and hospitals, incorporating access to not only weight-loss medications but also surgical options such as bariatric surgery. The initiative is part of a broader strategy to tackle obesity comprehensively, which includes a public consultation launched by the Department of Health. This consultation is expected to collect valuable feedback that can help shape the services offered and is open until March 1, 2024. The move toward public engagement reflects a growing recognition of the need for inclusive healthcare solutions that accommodate diverse individual needs.

Moreover, the Department is simultaneously developing a new Obesity Strategic Framework, titled 'Healthy Futures', which strives to foster an environment conducive to healthier lifestyle choices. This initiative places significant emphasis on improving diet and increasing physical activity—a crucial element in the long-term management and prevention of obesity-related health issues.

Public participation features prominently, with numerous online and in-person events to inform and involve community members in discussions about obesity prevention and management. These forums are designed to ensure that the opinions and experiences of those directly affected by obesity inform the development of necessary health services. Responses to the consultations will be accepted until February 16, 2024, marking a crucial period for shaping effective health strategies.

In recognition of the multifaceted nature of obesity, the British Psychological Society (BPS) Northern Ireland has also weighed in on the discussions surrounding the ROMS and the Obesity Strategic Framework. They underline the critical role that psychological support plays within these new initiatives, noting that mental health considerations are fundamental in delivering comprehensive care. Their insights point to the growing understanding that successful obesity management requires not just physical interventions but also addressing psychological barriers that individuals may face.

Overall, the launch of the Regional Obesity Management Service signifies a pivotal step in Northern Ireland’s ongoing efforts to confront obesity head-on. The collected public insights will undoubtedly shape the initiative's effectiveness and ensure that it meets the real, lived needs of the population it serves. As the region confronts the obesity epidemic, this long-term approach represents hope and commitment to making substantial improvements in public health.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1, 2
2. Paragraph 3
3. Paragraph 4
4. Paragraph 5
5. Paragraph 6
6. Paragraph 7

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://m.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/video-news/its-a-long-term-project-we-are-looking-at-health-minister-speaks-about-the-regional-obesity-management-service/a1249362153.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/consultations/proposed-regional-obesity-management-service-roms-northern-ireland> - The Department of Health in Northern Ireland launched a public consultation on the proposed Regional Obesity Management Service (ROMS). This initiative aims to provide specialized clinical support in community and hospital settings to address obesity, including access to weight loss medications and bariatric surgery, based on clinical assessments. The consultation period was from November 24, 2023, to March 1, 2024.
3. <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/news/new-obesity-consultations-launched> - On November 24, 2023, the Department of Health in Northern Ireland announced two public consultations: one for the development of a new Obesity Strategic Framework and another for the Regional Obesity Management Service (ROMS). These consultations aim to gather public input on strategies to prevent and manage obesity, with a deadline for responses set for February 16, 2024.
4. <https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/news/obesity-consultation-events> - The Department of Health in Northern Ireland organized a series of online and in-person events to engage the public in consultations regarding obesity prevention and management. These events were part of the development of the Obesity Strategic Framework and the Regional Obesity Management Service (ROMS), with the consultation period ending on February 16, 2024.
5. <https://www.bps.org.uk/news/bps-northern-ireland-responds-consultations-obesity-prevention-and-management> - The British Psychological Society (BPS) Northern Ireland responded to the Department of Health's consultations on obesity prevention and management. They highlighted the importance of psychological support in the proposed Regional Obesity Management Service (ROMS) and the Obesity Strategic Framework, emphasizing workforce considerations and the need for psychological input across all tiers of the proposed approach.
6. <https://www.strongertogetherni.org/doh-obesity-strategic-framework-healthy-futures/> - The Department of Health in Northern Ireland launched a public consultation on the development of a new Obesity Strategic Framework titled 'Healthy Futures'. This framework aims to create conditions that support individuals in improving their diet and increasing physical activity to reduce the risk of harm associated with obesity. The consultation period was open until February 16, 2024.
7. <https://www.4ni.co.uk/northern-ireland-news/304239/doh-calls-for-participants-for-new-obesity-strategic-framework> - The Department of Health in Northern Ireland called for public participation in the development of the 'Healthy Futures' Obesity Strategic Framework. This initiative seeks to gather public input on strategies to prevent and manage obesity, with a consultation period ending on February 16, 2024.