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The **DWELL (Diabetes and Wellbeing) project** was co-created by people affected by type 2 diabetes, and professionals working with them, to increase self-management of the condition, improving health and wellbeing measures and providing economic benefits to health services.

Diabetes is a long-term non-communicable disease of huge societal & economic concern. As of February 2025, approximately 4.6 million people in the UK have been diagnosed with diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is acquired later in life and can be successfully controlled through healthy lifestyle choices, and it accounts for about 90% of UK cases: around 4.14 million individuals has been diagnosed with the condition. Additionally, it's estimated that 1.3 million people have undiagnosed type 2 diabetes, bringing the total number to approximately 5.44 million. On average, 10% of public health expenditure goes on treating it, and its related complications. Whilst intensive self-management is known to be required, there is a lack of standard, effective, low-cost approaches, which are essential to sustainable treatment.

**DWELL** produced a non-clinical, holistic 12-week patient support programme covering education, nutrition, physical activity and wellbeing. Motivational interviewing and peer support are at the centre of the programme, empowering patients with type 2 diabetes to self-manage their condition, improve their wellbeing, lose weight, reduce medication and enjoy a better quality of life. Alongside this, **DWELL** created a training programme for staff to ensure they are able to deliver the patient support programme effectively.

**DWELL**'s robust evaluation demonstrated that the programme led to reduced weight, BMI, waist circumference and HbA1c; decreased negative feelings associated with diabetes, and eating in response to external food cues; and increased empowerment, perceived personal control, and understanding of the condition in its participants.

The direct costs of diabetes for 2021/22 in the UK were estimated at £10.7bn, with an additional £3.3bn of indirect costs. Diabetes is responsible for more than 180 amputations per week in the UK which are extremely costly for the healthcare system. Up to 80% are preventable with proper foot care, blood sugar control, wound care, and regular monitoring. Programmes like **DWELL**, which focus on holistic care, lifestyle changes, and patient education, can directly reduce the risks that lead to amputations. As a result of improving patients' long-term health and wellbeing, it is estimated that the project led to a per-person reduction in health service spending, potentially at the level of over £1m per thousand patients per year.

As one participant noted, 'It has changed my life completely...I have taken control – I am now looking after myself'