

Plain English Summary: Improving Diabetes Care for Underserved Groups

Diabetes affects millions of people in the UK, but not everyone gets the same quality of care. Some people, because of where they live, how much money they have, their background, or other life circumstances, find it harder to manage the condition. These unfair differences in health are known as *health inequalities*.

Three new areas of research funding are being highlighted by the [Diabetes Research Steering Groups](#) (DRSGs) to help improve diabetes care for people who are often overlooked:

Better Understanding of Diabetes in Different Ethnic Groups

People from Black, South Asian, and other ethnic backgrounds often experience diabetes differently. For example, they may get diagnosed at a younger age or with a lower body weight. Some may even be wrongly diagnosed. But most tools and tests used to predict or manage diabetes are based on data from White European people.

This means that the care many people receive might not be right for them.

Researchers are being encouraged to:

- Improve how we predict who is at risk of diabetes in all communities.
- Make diagnosis and treatment more personalised.
- Show how these improvements can help people stay healthier for longer and reduce costs for the NHS.

Physical Activity to Help Reduce Diabetes Inequalities

Being active helps prevent type 2 diabetes and manage it better if you already have it. But not everyone finds it easy to be active. Some people live in areas without green spaces, have low incomes, poor transport, or face racism. Many physical activity programmes don't reflect the needs of people from different communities.

This funding aims to support research that:

- Looks at how being active affects different communities with diabetes.
- Understands the reasons some people find it hard to be active.
- Creates new, inclusive ways to help more people become active in ways that suit their culture and lifestyle.

Supporting Women with Diabetes Across All Life Stages

Much of what we know about diabetes care is based on studies that didn't include enough women. But women's bodies go through unique changes like pregnancy and menopause that affect how diabetes works and how it should be treated.

Women from ethnic minorities and lower-income areas are more likely to have diabetes, but they often get the least personalised care.

This research funding will focus on:

- How diabetes affects women during puberty, pregnancy, and menopause.
- How to offer better support around fertility and pregnancy planning.
- How menopause affects blood sugar levels and mental health in women with diabetes.
- How to ensure women can access the right treatments and technology at the right times.
- How inequalities like ethnicity, income, and immigration status impact women's long-term health with diabetes.

Why This Research Matters

Steven Parks, Research Manager of the DRSGs, Living with Type 1 Diabetes for 27 years, said...

"These research areas all stem from the rich and honest discussions within the Diabetes Research Steering Groups. They highlight not only the wide range of health inequalities that exist in diabetes care but also the strong appetite among our members, people with lived experience, researchers, and healthcare professionals alike, to tackle them. There is a shared commitment across the DRSGs to drive forward research that leads to more inclusive, personalised, and equitable care for everyone affected by diabetes."