

## Table of themes and extracts

All participant and hospital names have been replaced with a pseudonym.

**Table S1.** Extracts for final themes.

Superordinate Theme	Subordinate Theme	Supporting Extract
PSE was challenging but essential	A long but necessary PSE	<p>George (13 references)</p> <p><i>'I was originally due to have my surgery in 2017, December 2017 but due to some last minute health issue that was identified, it was then put on hold so I ended up having a sleeve gastrectomy in February 2019 this year. So, it's been quite the process ehmm but originally as I said we did have an op for the 2017 but it got put on hold.'</i></p> <p><i>'And then they mentioned that obviously it would be quite a process, it's not something that happens overnight. That I would need to ehmm obviously see dietitians and a psychologist or psychiatrist sorry...'</i></p> <p><i>'He made it very clear that it wasn't going to be a quick fix, it's not an overnight procedure. That there is a wait, and obviously they need to prepare you for surgery so that is why at Wallace you meet the dietician, the psychiatrist, just to double check that you're kind of in the right frame of mind and kind of position for surgery'</i></p> <p><i>'So obviously as I said my op got cancelled. Originally my first op was due in December -17. Due to some other health issues that I was facing I went and saw an endocrinologist. Local to where I am, and he did some ehmm tests relating to something else. And because those tests came back... uhm he then decided to cancel the op and he was a bit frustrated because he had said that really this test should have been done under the bariatric team... because that would have then picked it up which would have done re-looked at everything.'</i></p> <p><i>'he just mentioned that I would see the nurse coordinator, I would see the dietitians, I would see a psychiatrist'</i></p> <p><i>'To put it in perspective, a good friend of mine she's gone and have the surgery done privately... and the difference is hers was rushed, she made the decision within a week, within a week she'd had all her appointments and she was having surgery. I personally feel... how... although mine's been longer than normal because we've had hiccups along the way... I think that were it longer process it allows you to absorb what you going to embark on and what you're going to have done.'</i></p> <p><i>'Uhm... I do think though the time frames, although we're always... although when you're waiting you just want... you want it done! I think it allows you that time to process'</i></p> <p><i>'I think obviously once the referral had been made... from the GP... I think I was then very aware that I was going have a lot of appointments to attend, especially after meeting the consultant, where we kind of had that first initial chat that I'm considering weight loss surgery. I think from then on it was a case of 'right this is going to be a lot of appointments, meetings different people'... so I think there was time spent'</i></p> <p><i>'Yeah, I think it's been time consuming... because it's been all the different appointments, and also... I don't want to slate Wallace's because they are great, but I got lost in the system as well. So, whilst the whole evaluation process was taking place, for about 9 months to nearly a year they forgot about me. And it only because I phoned the dietitian up about what's happening,</i></p>

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and they were like, 'oh you've got lost in the system' and I was like, 'what that is not good enough' so they then got me back on... not that I had to see the psychiatrist again but I then had to have kind of follow-ups with the dietitians, I had a follow up with the consultant, uhmm and again went over the surgery stuff, and I said I know all this because I spoke to the last guy...ehmm so I think now that has been time consuming again has affected the emotion you feel like you have to repeat yourself. But in reflection, looking back now, again although... I was [inaudible] that my original op got postponed, it's allowed me to kind of review, 'is this definitely what I want?'... and as I said to you where my friend that had it done privately, I don't she's had enough kind of prep work done.'

'I mean don't get me wrong I do feel it's been longer than then it should be... although it's been a long process, yeah it's been longer than it probably should have been but it has allowed me to actually really reflect, 'is this what I want', it's allowed me to do my own research on what I had been given, and it allowed me to go in and meet people in the support group where I could have those discussions, with kind of patients that have had it and those that are waiting to have it.'

'As I said, my friend that's had it privately, I just don't feel she's had, I think it was if a rushed, and when we reflected on kind of what I had done and what she's had done, I just don't think the supports there.'

'I do think that the process is definitely needed because it allows you to properly look at everything that you are just about to embark on... and I think that also cuz where he gave me the pre... the other thing where he gave me the pre-op diet sheets, I also... ehm whilst preparing during the evaluation process, I also kind of tested some of the options on the those diets. Again, which prepared me for when I had to do the liver shrinking diet, I knew what options I was more comfortable doing, and things like that. Things like that really helped, and now I mean I say to people start testing, trialling it cuz when you come to have surgery you got to do it, if you're really wanting this procedure you've got to stick to it ehm... So I think those bits helped'

'I think it's definitely needed, and I appreciate... I mean as I said it has been longer than I probably would've liked but it has allowed me to properly reflect whether this is something I wanted to kind of go down.'

#### Holly (6 references)

'Umm... and because they don't know you from Adam when you arrive, you just get letter from GP saying, 'can you see this woman, she is at this and the other', umm... I was there to believe it will be a full on, every single person'

'And then the nurse for whatever 'you know and don't know, what could happen and what could not happen'. And then the consultant.'

'umm a few things were highlighted to me that I hadn't actually thought of. So, I needed to...I can't remember exactly what they were, but I needed to go research those, so I could tick it off in my head that I got it understood'

'it can seem a very lengthy procedure... uhm... that the NHS just staggers through and tick boxes, and there really should be a fast track where suitable'

'the pre-op process to get me some more questions and that I then searched for, and I got answered and I was happy for it.'

'people are in for this quite long lengthy thing'

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Sabina (9 references)

*'Ehm... so I understood that it should be about 2-year wait, which wasn't the case for me... ehm...'*

*'I waited about 4 years since the second time she put in that application...'*

*'I think that the... uhmm... appointment times from like fitting in the dietitians to when you see the surgeon, I feel they're too far apart, and they're months apart'*

*'and uhmm... also I had a bad experience with... I went to see this psychiatrist, and when I got there, they told me that I don't have an appointment... and uhm... that I've been taken off the whole system, and I was like, 'how can I be taken off the whole system, when I last saw the surgeon, I got an OK, and I'm sure if I was I would've gotten a letter saying you know 'you've been taken off'. So, it was waste of travel going down there, and then have to wait months to see her again'*

*'Uhm and you know during that process, it was like a stressful time for me, and also, I was like comfort eater, so I had put on a lot of weight during that time, the cancelling appointment and the actual appointment'*

*'Uhm I expected not to get it because so many things has happened from the beginning... they said that they sent me letters for appointments, never turn up... uhm and I had to call them and chase them a lot for appointments, even to get my okay for surgery, I had to call them to see like what's going on'*

*'Uhm soo... Yeah I just felt like I had to chase them a lot.'*

*'I was really depressed because I just thought didn't know I was coming or going, I'd waited so long, I was just thinking, 'this whole process is pointless because I'm waiting like 3 or... 3 years at the time', and I'm thinking, 'I'm just wasted my 3 years, really going to these appointments, and I don't think I'll be having this surgery'.'*

*'And I think they need to make it a short span in time... I think even the 2 years is too long. Year and a half, I think is better.'*

Rachel (11 references)

*'So, I got referred and then I had, I thought I'd get an appointment straight away but of course I didn't. I had to wait quite a few months to get my initial appointment, and I kind of thought once I got to that part... you know my operation will be forthcoming'*

*'It's only going through the whole process of around 15 months... I was really cross at the time because I thought, 'why aren't they giving me my operation' but as I was going through the process, I understood the reasons behind it and how it's so important to understand that you have to be a participant in this'*

*'I understood... as I said as the process was carrying on, I understood why I was going through it.'*

*'I thought that they would check me out, make sure, you know, I was fit for surgery. Then surgery was gonna occur.'*

*'But its only after months and months of different appointments that you tend to see a bigger picture.'*

*'Cuz I felt like I'd been singled out to jump through these hoops, and not everybody else, if you know what I mean. So, I was quite cross at that time. But as I was moving forward and I was getting near to the end of this process*

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and I got my operation, I realised how important it was to understand all they were telling me before.'

'Uhm... I was looking forward to getting to the end of it so I could get my operation. There was the light at the end of the tunnel'

'It made me think that this was more serious... it was... even though I knew it was a decision, I thought, even if I was sorry it would be okay, but it made me realise that whatever I'm gonna do, this has lifelong consequences'

'I expected she was gonna tell me the wrong things I was doing at the moment... the right things I should be doing, and then after the op, what you gonna be doing then. [...] It did happen like that, but many more appointments than the one. '

'I had to think about things more. Cuz not only did I see the psychologist then, for time wise and obviously they had so many people in the pipeline to see, she referred me to 'talking therapies' locally and I had a load of that stuff with the guy there. And I suppose that really did, it made me cross at the time as well but really it makes you just think about things a little bit more, why I'm so cross, why I needed to drink to calm me down, what made me so cross, how could I be less cross, and stuff like that, you know. But I think a lot of it also stems from me being so unhappy about the size I am. Because now, I'm so much happier person, I still get cross but that's just my personality. [...] But it doesn't take much to get me cross! I'm not a nice laid-back person, I'm you know quite autistic that way, its gotta wrapping and its gotta wrapping, how I want it to... and if it doesn't, then I will be cross. It's just the way I am, I've accepted I am that way. I understand myself a lot more going through this process as well. [...] Yes, cuz I thought they would gonna, they're doing it to delay my operation and take away the goal. I didn't realise I had to go through this process and get myself straightened out before.'

'It made me think about going... you know how you just sort of go through your life, I mean you're really young, so you haven't been very far but... I sort of, you do things as you get older, you got your kids to see to, your parents are getting older you gotta see to them you're building your life, your building your home, you don't think about yourself as an individual because you got so many other things you gotta to do and you haven't got time for yourself in that sense. This process, obviously my kids are now grown up, I still got an elderly parent that I have to look after, but generally speaking life is so much easier. And so, it's given me time to think about myself, rather than blundering through not being aware of myself or... I've reached this stage at 60, I'm only starting to understanding me. I'm only just finding me and that's a hell of a long time to be on the Earth, going through your processes, meeting someone, building a home, having children, getting into school, dealing with all different things, working, juggling, everything... throughout that time from when you're kind of 25 till when your kids grow up and leave, and then...that's when I felt able to think about me and that process of going through this has helped with the psychology sides of things'

Scrutiny &  
Suitability

George (13 references)

'I've heard over the years I've kind of been on this journey that there are these different tier groups and that some people who have had to lose weight... to show... I've dieted for years so I had records. I've got all my Slimming World Books and things like that, they could see that I've really tried'

'the reason I needed to see the psychiatrist was because uhm they wanted to assess my eating habits... Also the dieticians, so linking in with those

professionals... it was to look into my eating habits, eh kind of my mental health...'

'some of the people had mentioned that, as I said it was like they had to go weekly meetings, to show what the weight were like. I was doing that with Slimming World'

'but with the psychiatrist we then went into a lot more and she was picking bits out from the kind of applications.'

'It was very intense... very intense. I mean they proper... she proper grilled me... eh to the point I mean she would... that meeting I think it was a two-hour appointment and we were talking about my sex life, eh everything, what I'm like with money which to be honest I would never have thought would have impacted the surgery... and... what I'm like with drinking but I mean she explained why she asked that. Like for example relationships she said, 'that relationships can be break down because obviously when you lose weight people start to notice you more'. With asking... I mean she got quite personal with regards to sex life and she said, 'it's because some people can take they can get that attention they kind of end up being a bit more promiscuous' and things like that... Money, she said, 'because obviously you can then buy clothes from standard shops'. So she explained why but again I don't think I was as prepared... and also because she was looking at kind of emotional... eh emotional kind of issues so it brought up things that I... so I lost my mom when I was young and it brought that back so I mean I came out of that meeting bursting into tears...'

'I mean obviously as I said things could have probably been done differently... And I maybe wasn't expecting kind of how... not brutal but yeah how deep they would go in.'

'I was expecting to go and be grilled on what you eating which is why I had my Slimming World book proof, 'this is what I'm eating, I keep food diaries' and they were like, 'have you been honest?' and I was like, 'yes because you can see on that day I ate like a horse''

'there was an idea that you couldn't put on weight... that if you were gaining weight then that could go against you so it was... there was that in my head as well that right, 'I really got to stick to this to try and continue losing weight' and that was a fear because during the pre... whilst I was waiting to find out whether I was going to be accepted, ehmm I had obviously gained...ehmm weight and I was like, 'this is going against me cuz I'm not showing them I'm losing weight', but now obviously I know why I was because there was that underlying condition. That was stressful in itself because obviously you're waiting to find out whether you can have a life-changing operation and then you're trying to work on maintaining or losing weight...'

'I mean the surgery itself I know when I first met the surgeon, he also mentioned that obviously there is a risk that you can... die... from surgery. That... I mean I know any surgery is risky, but I think that kind of hit home as well. Like, 'oh it's an operation on my stomach' [nervous laugh]. Umm so that was a bit... that kind of produced some fears.'

'I think it's being prejudged... I mean because it was not knowing what to expect... it was having those prejudgments already made.'

'because you have to be honest... but uhmm that's what I think I also worried about that I could say the wrong thing and that could go against me which as

*I said, she's then later on questioned me about me not ticking that box. I was just honest with her cuz I just thought there's no point in me lying'*

*'I think it has been challenging.'*

*'Ok, I think emotionally it's been a rollercoaster. You've had to address things that maybe you put aside... I think there's areas that you would never thought would have been in an issue with, in this kind of way with the surgery.'*

Holly (2 references)

*'I was quite worn down with the struggle'*

*'Uhm, I expected the dietitian to try and talk you out of having surgery.*

*On the... 'you got this, you can do this, so if you can eat less afterwards, then you can just eat less before!'. '*

Sabina (10 references)

*'I would have to prove I can lose weight and keep off for a certain amount of time... uhm and that I would most likely to see a dietician... aaand work out...'*

*'I saw the dietitian... maybe I saw her 3 times... and I think that was in the space of a year... I saw her about 3 times so she would check on my weight and everything'*

*'So the, that psychiatrist, holding that against me, that you could tell in her notes, cuz I got the letter as well, uhm and saying that I had put on the weight and put on back some weight and everything'*

*'Uhm... seeing the dietitian definitely. Umm I was thinking maybe I would see her like once a month, and for her to like ask me to keep food diary, uhm...'*

*'She was just evaluating me to make sure that I was OK to go through surgery. And that I wouldn't... mess up the surgery.'*

*'At the beginning I was excited, uhm... and then I was thinking 'okay let's see who she is, it's not too bad...' but then as time was going on, then I was like, 'okay well I'm not getting through surgery, I know I'm not getting it, uhm, I'm going to these appointments, but I know I'm not getting the surgery'. '*

*'I was very stressed because I didn't know how I was going to keep my weight off. Yes, I was going to Slimming World, Yes, they knew I was going to Slimming World, so everything that I saw the dietitian I would bring my book, Slimming World book, and she could see that how much weight I'd lost and so forth.'*

*'Uhm so I was stressed a little bit every time before I went to the dietitian because I was thinking, 'Have I lost any weight' and then seeing the surgeon... uhm... wasn't that stressed seeing the surgeon cuz I thought, 'everything should be okay'. '*

*'I was thinking that she might say that I'm too depressed, and that my goals are unrealistic because she did have a word with me about the size 10 and you need to let this go, because you may never reach size 10, and what are you going to do if you don't reach size 10. '*

*'Uhm... [pause] hmmm...it was a bit of like an inconvenience in the sense of me having to keep going down there and it being such a wide span of time, and so it was just thinking it was pointless, uhm thing for me. And especially at that time I was thinking, 'I know I'm not get the surgery'. Uhm yeah, I can't... ask the question again! I: No, just the impact the process has had on*

*your life, whether it's your mental well-being, physical or just general life as whole. P3: Uhm so, I was feeling a lot down, because again I was thinking I'm not going to get the surgery. And then, that spirals into putting on weight, so yeah it did affect my life a lot.'*

Rachel (15 references)

*'I was really cross at the time because I thought, 'why aren't they giving me my operation' but as I was going through the process, I understood the reasons behind it and how it's so important to understand that you have to be a participant in this. You have to control your food intake, even though you've got your little pouch and you have consequences if you eat the wrong thing. You can still do so, and everybody is different. You also learn along the way that... this operation has an effect on an individual person that is not known until you've had the operation. So, the consultant could never tell me, 'oh yeah its gonna work for you because it's worked for the last 50 people we've done'. Because it might not necessarily work. Some people wake up after putting themselves through that operation, and they're still eating like crazy. They still want food that it hasn't done anything for them. And that is a big thing to go through cuz its not reversible [laughs]. Once they've cut your stomach off and they've taken your intestines away, it's gone forever'*

*'I did see the psychiatrist quite a few times, uhm... they, when they gave me that pre-assessment and the physical assessment, and all the bloods and everything, it turned out that even though I was huge and 50% of me was fat, I actually was suffering from malnutrition. I had a problem where I'd basically stopped eating, and I still couldn't lose any weight. It was cuz my body was hanging on to everything. I was permanently starving. The food I did eat was not the right stuff to give me nutrition, and when all the bloods came back, they said you're seriously just got malnutrition. So, you've got this huge lady sitting there being told that she's got malnutrition. I couldn't get it straight to my head.'*

*'But its only after months and months of different appointments that you tend to see a bigger picture.'*

*'I used to drink quite a bit of alcohol, I wasn't an alcoholic or anything but I did regularly enjoy alcohol and they had to ensure that, that was knocked on the head as well before my operation'*

*'I didn't expect as much as I got to be honest. I ehm, I didn't expect to get so much information, like meetings about pre-op, and after the op, so I could be, once I got to that stage, I was mentally much more prepared and ready for my operation. I think a lot of people they go in quickly and blind and not given this information, then as successful afterwards as somebody who's been given all of that to start with.'*

*'I was looking forward to getting to the end of it so I could get my operation. There was the light at the end of the tunnel, so I did toe the line, I'm not very good at being told what to do but I toed the line because I knew if I stepped out of that line, I would end up being at back of the queue. They made it made quite clear, 'we're happy to do this for you, but you have to prove to us that you're almost worthy of it'. So, when they said I had to lose two stones that was so hard. And all the eating plan and joining in... I was so lazy. If I couldn't drive to the doorstep, I went home. I wouldn't even walk anywhere; I was so lazy. I never went out for a walk for pleasure or anything like that. And now gyming almost every day, its completely changed my life. And I was so, uhm I didn't realise how ill I was at the time, but now I'm well, I understand how awful things were for me before. Uhm yeah so I had to start*

that process, they tested me, I had to run between two spaces, and he timed me doing it and then he said, 'you join the gym, come back in three months' time, I'll time you again'. So, I knew I had to gym, I knew I had to do it to show him that I could do it quicker the next time. So, they don't just say it, they check you. And when you say you haven't had a drink; they'll give you a blood test. I know they will check you up. And they made it quite clear if you won't toe the line, if you didn't make your appointments, if you, if you cancelled, obviously things happen, you might be able to make a case, if you did phone up to cancel, you went straight back because there were 100s of people waiting to take your place. [...] Because I don't think things would've worked so well for me now in my mindset... if they hadn't been so strict with me. There is no, I'm the kind of person you can't tell me you can have a little bit. I want all of it, or its better say, 'no you can't have that'. I could accept you can't have it. I can't cope with a little bit of it, which is how I was put in this state in the first place [laughs].'

'It made me think that this was more serious... it was... even though I knew it was a decision, I thought, even if I was sorry it would be okay, but it made me realise that whatever I'm gonna do, this has lifelong consequences'

'Yeah, I suppose then I was a bit of a mess, and I had to be straightened out. It's a simple way of putting it.'

'You know my life is just...I've got a positive attitude towards it because my life has changed massively. I'm not saying I haven't had to input cuz I really have, it's been hard [laughs] but the outcome from going into this operation, thinking it might not work for me, nothing else has ever worked... and I can't imagine being normal size for the first time in my life... I still went in for the operation cuz it was last chance to live. I toed the line, I did exactly what they said, and the weight was coming off, so life was good... and you know I had to force myself to go that gym, even after the operation, I hated it. I still had to see the psychiatrist locally, not in the hospital, they had to keep me on the straight and narrow.'

'I expected she was gonna tell me the wrong things I was doing at the moment.... the right things I should be doing'

'Well, I think she would, because a lot of people overeat because of things that have happened to them in the past. That's not my case... I had a great childhood, I wasn't abused or anything like that, you know. Everything was fine for me; I think eat a lot [laughs]. So I assumed I was seeing this psychologist or whatever I was seeing to go through that kind of thing... uhm... but yeah she, she wanted to look behind why I like to have a drink, why I enjoying... [...] Why I overeat, because it doesn't matter if you don't get to the crux of why you overeat, operation or not operation, that is still gonna be there. And you'll still gonna want it. And if you can't have it when you really want it that's gonna add you more problems than before, so that has to all be straightened out first. [...] Yeah, but a bit more in-depth than I was expecting really.'

'I: Yeah it was alright, I was a bit cross cuz they were taking something else away from me [laughs]. You know my food had gone, my cigarettes, well that has nothing to do with it, but the cigarettes had gone but she said if I had smoked, they would've had gone. All I had left was to have a drink, and they were gonna take that a bit of enjoyment away from me. And I had to go through this whole thing about what's left. You know?'

'After... I knew what they wanted to talk to me about, yes, I would think about things... what we were gonna discussed so I was more into th appointment than I would've been previously.'



*'I would have been a bit more prepared for that. I found all that a little bit shocking [laughing].'*

*'Well they told me that... you know, basically to prove that I was engaged with this whole process and to prove that I could control my input. I had to lose two stone before my weight loss surgery. They told me this quite early on because it took a whole year to lose it.'*

'Psych' as a wall

George (2 references)

*'Yeah... I was also told that the psychiatrist... that was quite an important meeting because they would kind of the ones that would also sign off to say 'yes he is in... he is in kind of position where he can or know he needs to go back and look at this'. So I was... and that was through... that wasn't so much through the professionals, that was through the support group that that was kind of... not a whisper but a hear that it's the psychiatrist that is the one that you have to kind of get the OK. I did struggle with the psychiatrist because uhmm... she picked up that on the application I hadn't ticked to say that I would come back to the NHS weight loss scheme correction. And she did question me on that, and she said, 'well that could go against you... for surgery'. which I was a bit... 'really?'. And she said 'yeah', and I said, 'well look, I explained...', and she said, 'can I ask why you have not signed it?' And I said, 'because I don't know how I will be a year to 2 years after surgery. At the moment I go swimming, I teach Zumba', so I said, 'my body, although I'm not happy with it I will go swimming'. I said, 'after surgery and I have got loose skin I said I may not be in that right state of mind to go swimming'. And I said, 'because I'm not there now I can't say how I will be'. So, I was really unhappy to sign that and her response kind of... got me... and I just said. 'well look if it goes against me it goes against me I'm not signing something because I don't know how I will be in that situation'.'*

*'as I said I think I was just worried that that was the appointment that could make or break it. I think maybe in the back of my mind I was always conscious about not saying the wrong thing, not that I did... because you have to be honest... but uhmm that's what I think I also worried about that I could say the wrong thing and that could go against me which as I said, she's then later on questioned me about me not ticking that box. I was just honest with her cuz I just thought there's no point in me lying'*

Holly (3 references)

*'I was expecting they would be trying to figure ways to trip you up to say that you weren't suitable.'*

*'No, initially, I actually refused to go and see this... psycho-woman or she was psycho actually... Uhm... just because I thought it was a waste of my time. I won't be let anything up.'*

*'I don't like some of these psychologists one, the questions they try to get me in for, for how I would feel if I could eat again.'*

Sabina (2 references)

*'Seeing the psychiatrist, I was really stressed, and really down because I was thinking, 'what is she going to say, she must be a wall... uhm uhm... refuse me for surgery, and then that's that'.'*

*'Uhmm... No, I think just kind of went there knowing... what I was going say and what I wasn't going to say.'*

Rachel (2 references)

*'Well, cuz she went on to about the drinking, did I smoke and all of this. She wanted to suss me out I suppose.'*

*'I knew what they wanted to talk to me about, yes, I would think about things... what we were gonna discussed so I was more into the appointment than I would've been previously.'*

Coping processes to deal with the PSE

Psychological coping strategies

Holly (17 references)

*'Uhm and... once I've chosen that team it was a case of going through the motions on... going through admin on that team'*

*'I... was very much biased, I think. If I had to go through the psychologist there, it would been a lip-service/me getting very angry with what the experience I've had with other professionals in the in the... in the past, so I deemed that a total waste of time.'*

*'So, the whole morals of why you comfort eat and all the rest of it, I did not think applied to me. So, when I was faced with going through the whole load of those in Stanford Location 1, I was just intending to dismiss the psychologist'*

*'the departmental nurses, I have felt, and even the pre-op nurses I've been to... they're trying to then reassure me, and 'this was gonna happen and this can happen', I'm much more of cut to the chase. I need to tell you what's going to happen, and you need to write it down to make sure it happens'*

*'And I felt that she knew that I knew as much or more, and she was...uhm 'straight to the consultant'... I didn't need to be told the procedures or what is going to happen afterwards or... I didn't need to have the information.'*

*'Yes, the meek and mild approach when I went into various appointments, I've never been... the meek and mild approach.'*

*'Uhm she almost sat back in a chair and said 'right, this is, we will cut through the flannel of I'm going to tell you this and this and this, and it's going to be lovely and fine'.'*

*'Yes, practical! It went from... ego fluffing potential to practical'*

*'I was quite relieved to know that I wouldn't be going through all the different departments and I was quite relieved that it would just be a common-sense approach...'*

*'I had a lot of confidence that I would be taken seriously.'*

*'it was a bit of a bombshell in the first meeting. I didn't' think I'd be suitable for... getting my head looked at. At all'*

*'You need practical help from all the departmental nurses, to find out what is actually going to happen...'*

*'Logically, I... will have everything ticked in the box and I just need the information and the answer.'*

*'I like everything logically ticked off in lines... lined up, correctly, neatly and ticked. '*

*'It was just a necessity that had to be done to tick the box...'*

*'when he saw that I'm not an 'ego fluffing' person, he was very much more down to earth and explained to me what was going on and the complications I have and... it was very much more targeted at me'*

*'He wouldn't say that, you know, that I'm the greatest surgeon, I'm going to do this, and to do this, and you're just a...made me a thing on the table that and just going to do wonderful things with, he is kind of like, 'yeah, I think you know that you've got this problem' and I will say 'Yeah I need this bit cut out, this bit done, this bit done' so, I'm on a level pegging with his medical knowledge'*

#### Sabina (2 references)

*'And, I think that if I were had went in there still saying that I was gonna get to a size 10, they would've refused me. Because they was like 'she's adamant that she's getting into a size 10.'*

*'I was really conflicted because when I saw the dietitian like I said to you, 'you only lose X amount of weight, you'll never lose more than that', and then like I said watching the US programme, I was like, 'but this person weighs waay more than me, they weigh 600 pounds, and they've lost twice my body weight', so it was really like confused, and then going to monthly group meetings, then that dietitian and the nurse that was there saying, 'well actually you can lose as much weight as you want to, as long as you're exercising within that first year', but then... I'm like, 'well that doesn't make any sense' cuz the other dietitian said something completely different.'*

#### Rachel (5 references)

*'I felt like I'd been singled out to jump through these hoops, and not everybody else, if you know what I mean. So, I was quite cross at that time'*

*'I toed the line because I knew if I stepped out of that line, I would end up being at back of the queue.'*

*'Yes, cuz I thought they would gonna, they're doing it to delay my operation and take away the goal. I didn't realise I had to go through this process and get myself straightened out before.'*

*'A bit of both I would say, a bit of both. [...] Cuz like I said when you come out of the hospital its really overwhelming, you got to remember everything you've been thought previous.'*

*'And didn't want to go to the pace class either because I didn't want to meet people that, they were obviously doing their pace class in prep for their op, cuz they had their date, cuz normally you get your date months in advance so I didn't want to engage with any of that, until I knew I was having my op. And I passed all the hoops that I had to jump through'*

#### Doing your own research

#### George (13 references)

*'It's probably since joining the support group, that I think, because obviously you meet patients who have had it or...like at the time, like me were waiting to have it, they had said that they oh they had to be on certain things so like there are these tier groups.'*

*'that wasn't so much through the professionals, that was through the support group that that was kind of...'*

*'Yeah from the support group'*

*'I think with me... that...well in general there is onus that if you're going to embark on something like this you also need to do your research. It's all very well relying on the health professionals but as we all know our health colleagues are extremely under pressure, so there maybe not always in the*

*best... train... I don't know if that's the word but to give out the stuff. So I researched myself as well, and I think by going to the support group... that also helped me to... to speak to others.'*

*'the support group that I'm on we have a Facebook group... and even now when people are going there's still people asking now, 'what should I expect at the psychiatrist appointment'.'*

*'as I said that are questioning what to expect and those of us that had it done we then go on and put, 'this is our experience, what they asked, what they're likely to cover', so I think they're still information that's probably needed'*

*'and I think again we all have an onus that we have to ask questions, there's no point going into an appointment and not kind of leading that to some degree, cuz you you're in charge on your own kind of destiny, so I made it very clear that I wanted to know exactly what was happening... that I know maybe not everyone is like that.'*

*'it was a lot more about doing my research, liaising with the group and like that.'*

*'but yeah it was definitely the support group, it was like, 'I've got this appointment coming up, what should I expect? what question do they going to ask? how long is the appointment going to last?' things like that.'*

*'it's allowed me to do my own research on what I had been given, and it allowed me to go in and meet people in the support group where I could have those discussions'*

*'I also kind of tested some of the options on the those diets. Again, which prepared me for when I had to do the liver shrinking diet, I knew what options I was more comfortable doing, and things like that.'*

*'And the day of surgery, sorry the day after surgery, I knew more about what I could eat and what I couldn't eat than the nurse that came to see me. All she did was give me to diet sheets, and now I said I've got all that and I know all that.'*

*'but I said I did a lot of my own research so...'*

## **Holly (17 references)**

*'And the way I had to do that was to go onto Google to find where they were and then I went on to patient groups in each of the hospitals just to get the vibe on what was going on and I researched the amount of disasters that each surgeon had had, and chose my bariatric department based on that.'*

*'So, she was happy to be guided on the research I've done.'*

*'The consultant, but I went to see the nurse first and she was like, 'ah you know as much about bariatric surgery as me, we'll put you straight on to the consultant'.'*

*'So I'm...well in the appointment at Location 1, I very much took the lead, with the nurse...'*

*'And I felt that she knew that I knew as much or more, and she was...uhm 'straight to the consultant'... I didn't need to be told the procedures or what is going to happen afterwards or... I didn't need to have the information.'*

*'I will do my research, I will do a lot of research [intonation emphasis], then I'll do more research, and then I'll go in with a list of questions written down. And if they're not answered, I will go back until I get the answer... one way or the other. [...] Lists. I bought a very good book to start with. [...] Yes, and*

*blogs actually, and we have chat rooms types. There was one very... good at... haven't been on in years now... uhm Weight-less one that had mostly British but quite a few around the world and... a lot of questions that people asked on there was something I would never have thought of... so in combined with the book, and people's blogs were, I tried to think how... it would fit into my life.'*

*'And some books and there is a very good book I had; it was specific on gastric banding, but it... opened questions to the whole spectrum of things that could happen. And there is another good book that was written by one of the psychiatrist people at Wallace's, I can't remember her name... that was quite a good back... but a little bit too technical in parts. [...] I looked at the scientific papers that my consultant had written.'*

*'I'm glad I did so much research before mine because I don't think the information that I hear from other people is adequate to make a decision and there is always lots of people asking, saying, 'I think I want to a bypass but been put for a sleeve', 'I think I want a sleeve, but I'm going to get a bypass, I don't know why I've got this' so I don't think the... level of choice... would... if I went into this blind, the level of information would not be satisfactory for me to make a choice... it's only because it's in my nature to do so much research.'*

*'I'm cynical enough to have looked at my surgeons that list that they do to see which one they prefer. So when I made my initial decisions, uhm that list hadn't come into being. Its only since I subsequently looked that that seems to be my surgeons favourite approach and I felt that I would have been pushed through his favourite operation, as opposed to one that was more suited for me.'*

*'But I also think each person needs to get it sorted within enough research, what to do. I think we need to take control of our destiny and not be led by doctors who think they're very clever. '*

*'I'm more happier to manage myself. For some people that just let the hospital do things and all the doctor said, 'this will...', my question would be why! So, I'm happy to... lead the professionals, I think.*

*'I... probably researched many hours a day for about a month. [...] Probably be several hours a day for about a month, I was looking into.*

*'I absorbed people's information as opposed to put my own... '*

*'You are responsible for what you've done to yourself, although I'm not responsible for diabetes, but I'm responsible for what I'm doing to my body. I don't think the NHS should be there to pick everyone up and soothe their egos. Everyone has access to Google. If you got no money, go to your local library, free! [...] Everyone has access to the information, it's not up to the NHS to spoon feed you.'*

*'I don't think they're going to have as much success as the people that do the research, their own research for their own questions, and go into it with their eyes wide open...'*

*'my one has treated me now, I'm on a level pegging with him...because I, I've had to research so much.'*

*'he is kind of like, 'yeah, I think you know that you've got this problem' and I will say 'Yeah I need this bit cut out, this bit done, this bit done' so, I'm on a level pegging with his medical knowledge.'*

*'but I knew that I wanted to surgery because I had done my own research before going to her, so I knew about surgery on my own.'*

*'The Internet, a lot. So, like I said, I did a lot of research like years before... uhm so I knew about surgery and that's the reason why I went there to my GP because I knew I could access it through that way. Uhm but like friends and family no... I'm the one who introduced them to it.'*

*'Wallace's they have a thing, a monthly thing, where you can go there and see other people's experiences like a group, so I went there, so apart from seeing the dietitian, then I went there and that's how I got some more knowledge.'*

*'The only way I kind of knew those things was going to those monthly meeting like I was speaking to other people that been there five years out, year out, two years out, of surgery'*

*'If I had never gone to that meeting, I wouldn't have known.'*

*'My 600 pounds life', so it's an American programme, and its people that have had the bariatric surgery, all forms of the bariatric surgery. So that's where I got my expectations from, but not how long that this final period will be. Because with that its only... uhm... a surgeon that's there. But he does work with psychiatrist, like physiotherapy, things... people like that, nurses... umm so that's only where I got my expectations from and knowing what's going to happen. And what type of foods to eat and things like that.'*

*'then I went to that monthly meeting, and then they're like 'oh you don't eat that, oh you don't eat that', whereas you should know this as a dietitian before I've had the surgery and work out something that can help me.'*

#### Rachel (4 references)

*'I went to my GP, and I thought, 'well if I just get referred, find out more about it', a friend had really taken me to her hospital, and I found out a little bit about it then. So, it was a big decision taken over a long time.'*

*'I didn't expect as much as I got to be honest. I ehm, I didn't expect to get so much information, like meetings about pre-op, and after the op, so I could be, once I got to that stage, I was mentally much more prepared and ready for my operation. I think a lot of people they go in quickly and blind and not given this information, then as successful afterwards as somebody who's been given all of that to start with.'*

*'No, appointments came through the post and I just went along'*

*'As I said, I didn't go to the support group, I wish I had now, but I didn't at the time cuz I thought I'd be really upset that everyone there would've been given a date for their operation and everything else. I didn't realise that when you got your date it was only gonna be 2 weeks before you actually get done, you know. I thought you'd get told months in advance [laughs]. So yeah, if I had... I act upon the knowledge that I've got, and so had I got that knowledge I may have gone to the support and got something from it.'*

#### Support systems George (8 references)

*'I think my GP put in a really good argument that 'he's also quite active'.'*

*'think because my GP had put in a really good case where she could... because the application for the weight loss I mean that was a 15-page document my GP had to fill out.'*

*'I think it was more case of just speaking to friends and family... particularly after the psychiatrist appointment, because obviously that had upset me and*

*brought up things...ehmm that was the case of speaking to, yeah I think friends and family, and obviously the few people at the time that did I met and I'd made connections to at the support group...'*

*'It's all very well to speak to friends and family but if they haven't gone through it... they don't appreciate or understand what you're going through. Whereas people at group, the support group do. And obviously they've, those that have gone through it, know exactly what's been asked and they can relate more. So, I do think, I mean even now post-surgery that support group is a mechanism'*

*'at the time it was through my GP, and it was looking at uhmm... it was looking at relationship, but as that counselling kind of went on, it then was linked into kind of how I perceived myself, weight loss and then as that counselling was coming to an end, that's when... during that process I was confirmed on the list. So, then counselling looked at some of the issues around surgery and stuff like that. I do think again, that is something that should be offered...'*

*'I mean thankfully I've got a support network but if you haven't got that and you've not, I mean some people even now at group they're not comfortable talking to others at the group. So, if you don't have a support network at home... you're kind of on your own, and I do you think...'*

*'And maybe had the counselling been offered after the psychiatry appointment that would've kind of made that a bit easier'*

*'I think preparing for it was literally case of speaking to the support group...'*

#### Holly (1 reference)

*'The consultants... I got what I eventually expected, which was a knowledgeable person would listen to my individual concerns and... uhh... fight my corner for me as opposed to... whatever the NHS says'*

#### Sabina (4 references)

*'So, I went to my GP maybe about five years ago now and uhm and I explained my depression, my health conditions and everything like that, and I asked to be part of the programme. And then he refused me...uhm and a year later, I went to, the female GP and said the same situation, she put an application and then I didn't qualify and so she put the application in again, and so then I did qualify the second time.'*

*'so I don't know I feel like, as a service they need to be more... sympathetic and they need to like have... someone to like support us.'*

*'I think it's too much of a reach for the NHS [laughs], but I think I was thinking that I might see someone for my mental health because it's not just about the fact that I'm gonna lose weight, it's all about what's going on up there [pointing to head] in your head, so I think, I thought I would see someone, even if it was monthly just to check how my mental health is going, uhm... yeah.'*

*'She was just evaluating me to make sure that I was OK to go through surgery. And that I wouldn't... mess up the surgery. So, it was a one-off evaluation of maybe an hour, an hour and a half, so I had to do something myself to make sure that I will be okay after surgery.'*

#### Rachel (8 references)

*'Well I think my role, is why I go to the support group, is to help others.'*

*'I still had to see the psychiatrist locally, not in the hospital, they had to keep me on the straight and narrow. And yeah, I just stuck with it and eventually after about 18 months, it becomes a way of life. Now I don't think about it, I just put my gym stuff on, and I go. And I go early to get out the way, and then I can live my day. It was all such a big deal with the beginning cuz it was something so new. And it is the same with the food'*

*'Why I overeat, because it doesn't matter if you don't get to the crux of why you overeat, operation or not operation, that is still gonna be there. And you'll still gonna want it. And if you can't have it when you really want it that's gonna add you more problems than before, so that has to all be straightened out first.'*

*'she referred me to 'talking therapies' locally and I had a load of that stuff with the guy there'*

*'As I said, I didn't go to the support group, I wish I had now, but I didn't at the time'*

*'So yeah, if I had... I act upon the knowledge that I've got, and so had I got that knowledge I may have gone to the support and got something from it.'*

*'No, I thought the support was pretty good actually, in my particular case. I didn't feel that I have been left or had to cope with anything on my own. The staff were all very lovely, they always said, 'if you have a problem, give us a call', you know...'*

*'Overall... I felt that I'd got a lot of input and attention. I felt that... the staff listened to me... they were sometimes had to be patient with me. If I wanted to talk for a long time about something, they never made me feel that your time is up, and we have to leave. Seeing the surgeon, my daughter came with me cuz they didn't, my family didn't want me to have this operation. I said my next surgeon appointment... and you come with, see what's involved. My daughter had a lot of questions, we must've been there 2 hours. Not one time did she say or not answer our questions. I felt that I'd got really excellent input from the Hillsdale, and from the staff that I met when I was there.'*

#### Past experiences influencing current perspectives

#### George (4 references)

*'I think, I think that's because if not maybe the medical team at Wallace's but medical professionals throughout the whole of my life. I think it's very... some professionals again not Wallace's but medical professionals that I've seen over the years have been very quick to judge that I am the size I am because I'm lazy, I eat too much, and things like that'*

*'So I think because of that I was expecting to go and be grilled on what you eating which is why I had my Slimming World book proof'*

*because I've my other health issue I know kind of advocate for that to say, 'look yeah you could be a bigger person but don't just assume someone is eating too much and not exercising' cz there could be other things going on.'*

*'I think it's being prejudged... I mean because it was not knowing what to expect... it was having those prejudgments already made.'*

#### Holly (4 references)

*'it would been a lip-service/me getting very angry with what the experience I've had with other professionals in the in the... in the past, so I deemed that a*



*total waste of time. And the lady that I had to see, to start with, I started all this privately, she was a complete shyster and I deemed the whole... section of why you should get bariatric surgery a waste of time'*

*'So... again, with them I would take lead because on my very first's uhm... bariatric surgery, I did tell the doctor what could happen and what will resolve it and they were like, 'yeah it will be fine', until they had to stop surgery and get me alive. And then, since then I've made sure I've made every single surgery I've had very aware'*

*'I think it's just through a life of some particular hard knocks that... I've tended to be a strong person I think, and... some incidents happened when I was at work not long before I had the surgery...uhm... may be into a 'don't mess with me' type of the person.'*

*'Yeah but its character forming.'*

Sabina (1 reference)

*'because I had lost weight before but I still was very depressed, so I knew that I had to do that. So I prepared in that way'*

Rachel (5 references)

*'Okay, so it took me a long time to decide on it. I thought about it for quite a long time, I knew some other people that had had it done and they had marvellous results.'*

*'All my life I couldn't lose weight, I've got no control when it came to food. I felt like this was the last chance to look some that little a bit older. I thought if I don't do it now, I'm going to have terrible problems as I move on in life'*

*'I like most people did think that you have this operation and magically all your weights gonna go and it's gonna be wonderful and you're gonna be a normal person for the first time in your life.'*

*'I think for me, the friend that I was saying about before who had had the operation, had gone privately and paid for her operation. Obviously, they don't care whether you are successful or not, they take their 10 grand, they whip at your stomach, byedibye, end of. And that was the experience I saw from her, so I didn't think I was gonna get so much individual attention from the national health. When she'd paid out all that money, and got it...'*

*'Well, I think she would, because a lot of people overeat because of things that have happened to them in the past. That's not my case... I had a great childhood, I wasn't abused or anything like that, you know. Everything was fine for me; I think eat a lot [laughs]. So I assumed I was seeing this psychologist or whatever I was seeing to go through that kind of thing... uhm... but yeah she, she wanted to look behind why I like to have a drink, why I enjoying...'*

Self-perception

George (2 references)

*'I am a very active person... who just struggled to lose weight. But as I said, since then we have now highlighted that I have an underlying health issue which is contributing to my weight gain or my weight issue.'*

*'And I said, 'because I don't know how I will be a year to 2 years after surgery. At the moment I go swimming, I teach Zumba', so I said, 'my body, although I'm not happy with it I will go swimming'. I said, 'after surgery and I have got loose skin I said I may not be in that right state of mind to go*

*swimming'. And I said, 'because I'm not there now I can't say how I will be'. So, I was really unhappy to sign that and her response kind of... got me... and I just said. 'well look if it goes against me it goes against me I'm not signing something because I don't know how I will be in that situation'.'*

#### Holly (4 references)

*'Umm... I... am of the opinion I'm fairly well enough to stand on my own two feet, and don't need my head examined. So while some people are...uhm... blubbery and use food as a tool, I did, started bariatric surgery to try and buy myself time for my diabetes'*

*'So, the whole morals of why you comfort eat and all the rest of it, I did not think applied to me'*

*'I've not had a problem with what I mean, it was just a little bit of a quantity issue, because I've always liked uhm home cooked food, which is why I'm slightly cursed now.'*

*'So for the people that, unfortunately, stuff themselves because they were abused as a three-year-old, and now they're 50, I logically would need to see a tie cut in that, so they are... weak... weaker people and I think they would need a lot of hand holding. There needs to be a fast track for people like me and that are very strong emotionally and is clear and logical'*

#### Sabina (1 reference)

*'I think that the way I did for myself was good because after when I saw that psychiatrist I said to her even in that meeting I'm going to see someone [referring to mental health professional] on a regular basis because I knew that was paramount for me even though I think that is paramount of everyone that has this surgery because it's not just... even though [inaudible] about what is going on in your mind, so I knew I had to do that for me...'*

#### Rachel (6 references)

*'There is no, I'm the kind of person you can't tell me you can have a little bit. I want all of it, or its better say, 'no you can't have that'. I could accept you can't have it. I can't cope with a little bit of it, which is how I was put in this state in the first place [laughs].'*

*'Yeah, I suppose then I was a bit of a mess, and I had to be straightened out. It's a simple way of putting it.'*

*'Well, I think she would, because a lot of people overeat because of things that have happened to them in the past. That's not my case... I had a great childhood, I wasn't abused or anything like that, you know. Everything was fine for me; I think eat a lot [laughs].'*

*'Why I overeat, because it doesn't matter if you don't get to the crux of why you overeat, operation or not operation, that is still gonna be there. And you'll still gonna want it. And if you can't have it when you really want it that's gonna add you more problems than before, so that has to all be straightened out first.'*

*'But I think a lot of it also stems from me being so unhappy about the size I am. Because now, I'm so much happier person, I still get cross but that's just my personality.'*

*'But it doesn't take much to get me cross! I'm not a nice laid-back person, I'm you know quite autistic that way, its gotta wrapping and its gotta wrapping, how I want it to... and if it doesn't, then I will be cross. It's just the way I am, I've accepted I am that way. I understand myself a lot more going through this process as well.'*

**Staff & service evaluation**

**A tailored PSE**

George (2 references)

*'I think professionals outside of Wallace's, I think they're understanding that if you are bigger person there could be more going on that you're not just finding eating too much or not exercising enough... because again we're all individuals, we're all different.'*

*'Also, like lifestyle... because I think that comes... I mean why I'm linking that in is because particularly what the psychiatrist brought up like drinking, I think depending on what age you have this, I mean I am in my thirties... ehmm so I'm quite a younger patient so I've still got kind of... I'm single, I go out and things like that, so obviously for me I had to think of that aspects. Like you can't drink for the first year and things like that, whereas I think if you're an older patient you're not going to have the same... I don't know what the word is but the same kind of lifestyle. And again I think that need to be looked at an early stage because it is a lifestyle change but I think if you're someone that is kind of keen on going out and things like that...'*

Holly (5 references)

*'Yes. I think it's... umm it's an individual whose having surgery to their body, it's not the NHS's to try and soothe everyone's... passage through.'*

*'I don't think it was suitable for me... and it could have been very much streamlined. I am fairly sure that no... not as many people going into the surgery are quite as logical and intelligent about it as I've been.'*

*'I think it needs to be targeted for different levels of people.'*

*'So for the people that, unfortunately, stuff themselves because they were abused as a three-year-old, and now they're 50, I logically would need to see a tie cut in that, so they are... weak... weaker people and I think they would need a lot of hand holding. There needs to be a fast track for people like me and that are very strong emotionally and is clear and logical'*

*'there really should be a fast track where suitable'*

Rachel (2 references)

*'everybody is different. You also learn along the way that... this operation has an effect on an individual person that is not known until you've had the operation. So, the consultant could never tell me, 'oh yeah its gonna work for you because it's worked for the last 50 people we've done'. Because it might not necessarily work.'*

*'as I was an older person, I fell that that wasn't such a big decision as a person saying in the 30s your age, because that's a hell of a lot longer, you have to have these life changing things for than I do'*

**Level of information**

George (10 references)

*'Ehm... you know it was very mixed because there's been mentioned of these tiers... so like Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3. I was never explained anything about that. I don't know if that's because of the size I was at the time, I don't know.'*

*'And that's when I was like 'oh what's that because I haven't been told anything about that?' Ehm... as I said I don't know if that was because I was oversized and they were like 'well you need the op'.'*

*'I don't think I was as prepared... and also because she was looking at kind of emotional... ehm emotional kind of issues so it brought up things that I... so I lost my mom when I was young and it brought that back so I mean I came out of that meeting bursting into tears...'*

*'and maybe it could have been, that could have been prewarned that you will have a psychiatrist appointment and it will look at these issues.'*

*'He didn't give me a sheet, he just mentioned that I would see the nurse coordinator'*

*'I do think some of the information could have been better... like by the psychiatrist. Some information sheet of what type of things they going to discuss... maybe a bit better understanding of the different tiers because as I said I didn't know anything about that, and no one never mention to me that I needed to do anything like that or that I was in a particular tier. Ehm so maybe that would be better. As I said I was just told you'd see these people and then you'd go to their list if you're kind of accepted for surgery after they've discussed it in the team. So I think that process could be better.'*

*'I think some of the information that they were maybe going to looking at, particularly the psychiatrist appointment... I think they could do better information on that particular appointment, on what they were going to go over'*

*'Ehmm...yeah on the Facebook group there's people now as I said that are questioning what to expect and those of us that had it done we then go on and put, 'this is our experience, what they asked, what they're likely to cover', so I think they're still information that's probably needed... and you still get pre-op patients saying, 'I've met this person what is the next step', so I think it's maybe... like a timeline of 'you'll meet this person to begin with and then what kind of should happen'. Now that would be very helpful and that would also... I mean that would have probably reduced my anxieties.'*

*'I do think there's ways they can maybe do things differently. Uhm and maybe some of the information they hand out could be... more informative.'*

#### Holly (2 references)

*'I... don't understand why... I would have been put forward for one surgery to start with, rather than the others... other than I'm cynical enough to have looked at my surgeons that list that they do to see which one they prefer. So when I made my initial decisions, uhm that list hadn't come into being. Its only since I subsequently looked that that seems to be my surgeons favourite approach and I felt that I would have been pushed through his favourite operation, as opposed to one that was more suited for me.'*

*'I still don't know why the other one would've be better... and cuz lost I've faith in that surgeon. I wouldn't know but I... I felt the consultants was like 'yes, we're going to do this, and it will be great' as opposed to, 'actually, no I don't think it's going to be great and I want to know why'.'*

#### Sabina (7 references)

*'I didn't really understand much about the surgery itself... ehm because she didn't go into depth about it'*

*'I didn't know there would be tiers or anything like that.'*

*'Uhm I think it was okay, but I feel it was too general, and on the surface. Uhm I kind of feel they need to have something that is more in depth, like especially, there's a couple of tiers, it needs to be more something in depth. And what each tier is gonna entail.'*

*'When I met the dietitian, literally I felt like she didn't give me any information on what might eating would be like after surgery. The only way I kind of knew those things was going to those monthly meeting like I was speaking to other people that been there five years out, year out, two years out, of surgery. Uhm so... like when I actually had the surgery, I felt completely lost that I didn't know what to do, what to eat, at that point I hadn't seen the dietitian in four years... ehm so I was like, 'what am I to do that only the thing I know I have to do is this liquid diet... ehm before I had the surgery and I know in the first couple of weeks I would have to do the liquid diet, but they didn't, they don't give enough information, well in my case, they don't give enough information on what kind of foods you're going... they expect you to eat, what if there is anything you can never eat. And there is medication you can no longer take. I only learned there is medication I can no longer take through going to that meeting. If I had never gone to that meeting, I wouldn't have known.'*

*'No, because even when you try and like Google it all, YouTube it, there is not a lot of English people that give their like experience on how long it took or anything like that. And at the time, I wasn't on Instagram so I didn't know there was a bariatric community for Instagram, so I didn't know what to expect, I just knew the American version.'*

*'[Pause] I think they need to give more information... uhm especially about the stages and what you can eat, and like for instance, I don't eat red meat, and uhm... I eat chicken and fish... and... so... because of the surgery you need to eat high amount of protein, so it's hard for me to get into that high amount of protein if I don't eat red meat, and I don't eat eggs, and I don't eat a lot of those things that are high protein, and they didn't know these things until after the surgery, then I went to that monthly meeting, and then they're like 'oh you don't eat that, oh you don't eat that', whereas you should know this as a dietitian before I've had the surgery and work out something that can help me. I: Yeah. And what about their role in giving you information about the evaluation itself, rather than the effects of the surgery... what do you think of their role in relation to that specifically? P3: I think that they need to have like a booklet or something, or even if they did like a video, and it's on their public page, even if its private or NHS and it's on their page to explain each tier and what they expect of the patient, so people aren't in the dark, and they don't know what the next steps are and what is going to happen after surgery... uhm like I didn't know that there would be an objection that I would be expected to take for 2 weeks straight, until I had surgery.'*

*'I was really conflicted because when I saw the dietitian like I said to you, 'you only lose X amount of weight, you'll never lose more than that', and then like I said watching the US programme, I was like, 'but this person weighs waay more than me, they weigh 600 pounds, and they've lost twice my body weight', so it was really like confused, and then going to monthly group meetings, then that dietitian and the nurse that was there saying, 'well actually you can lose as much weight as you want to, as long as you're exercising within that first year', but then... I'm like, 'well that doesn't make any sense' cuz the other dietitian said something completely different.'*

Rachel (11 references)

*'Had they, they should... I think they should've said to me a little bit, 'you're not gotta get your operation straight away, you qualify, but you have to go through this process because we need to see that you're committed, how you are psychologically'.*

*'It was just in my head cuz they didn't tell me. I think initially had they explained a little bit more the actual process... a lot of people that I met were cross, the same as me.'*

*'I didn't get much from the GP, but I felt that the Hillsdale gave a lot of information. They did. But you see so many different people... I think if you did seen like the one person initially and they would've said, 'look this is a process that you're gonna go through, its gonna take at least a year, you've got to prove to us that you could lose weight, must lose your 2 stones first, its gonna take this length of time and you've got to start going to the gym', if that would've told me initially...'*

*'I didn't understand... it was only as I was going through the process that I understood the reasoning behind it all. Initially, I didn't understand why they were delaying me.'*

*'I didn't expect as much as I got to be honest. I ehm, I didn't expect to get so much information, like meetings about pre-op, and after the op, so I could be, once I got to that stage, I was mentally much more prepared and ready for my operation'*

*'I think if they would've been a bit more specific in the beginning, uhm it would be better for me personally. If they would have just said, 'you're not gonna get your operation for at least a year, you're gonna have to do this, this and this first... that would have been better for me. Maybe some people might've react differently to that information, and it is better to feed them in little class, but for me, I think I would've got less cross with the whole thing had I'd been told in the beginning that this is what's going to happened and why.'*

*'Well, as I said, I was cross about it umm I think if I'd been explained to a little more in the beginning... what it was gonna entail, it would been better for me personally'*

*'I didn't mind. There was more to it than I was expecting. And for me, personally, I would have liked to have known... what was... [pause]'*

*'Better as I've gone through further. I think I would've coped further in the beginning, as I keep saying, if I'd have been given, almost been given a schedule. That's how I like to, you know, 'this is whats gonna happen in the next year' and I could be ticking my boxes off and I've got this far now, and I'm gonna get this further. Uhhh I was working blind I didn't know any of that. If I would've know that... you know you're gonna be given your date, and you're gonna just be on your liquid diet for two weeks, and then you're gonna go in... for your op, uhm...I would have been a bit more prepared for that. I found all that a little bit shocking [laughing].'*

*'Just this... advanced knowledge would've helped me personally.'*

*'I would've liked to... in my first appointment, when they do that initial assessment and take the bloods and everything, if they could've given me some sort of schedule or timeline as to what the process entailed, or what I would be going through beforehand... it would have made it better for me.'*

Praise & criticism  
of service

George (9 references)

*'She was fantastic, she has sadly since retired but she, she was fantastic she...'*

*'She also kind of reassured me that I would meet dietitians, the psychiatrist.'*

*'the nurse coordinator was always at the end of the phone.'*

*'I think that the professionals at Wallace's, I can't fault them.'*

*'I was just going to say that's now, I mean I feel like I owe lot to Wallace because obviously what they've given me'*

*'so by giving something back, I make an effort to go to the support groups... and cuz I also teach Zumba so I do that at the support groups as well... to kind of show them and to say thank you to Wallace's cuz I appreciate what they've done for me'*

*'I've met the professionals, particular at Wallace's, once you met them you do then feel very relaxed...'*

*'I don't want to slate Wallace's because they are great'*

*'I also think having a nurse coordinator because she was at the end of the phone. I do think now that they've not got that position there, things have slipped slightly. For example, post-surgery she used to come and see you on the ward... and if you kind of... all the information you needed... ehm well she left just before I had my surgery.'*

Holly (16 references)

*'Yeah, the team at Wallace's were... uhm unhelpful, uncooperative, difficult and... frankly shouldn't be mostly in their jobs.'*

*'their departmental secretary is actually quite unhelpful.'*

*'Umm from the Wallace' team, they would just say, 'oh we need uhm to do a reversal, make a change, but we don't know why' and I kept saying, 'What's wrong with me? Why can I not eat or drink after this? I could before'...umm and they were just umm dismissive and hoping I'd either get better or go away.'*

*'Yeah, my GP, as many GPs, knew absolutely nothing about bariatric surgery. So, she was happy to be guided on the research I've done.'*

*'Yes, the psycho thing umm... I have less than no...umm opinion of them. Sorry about you being... [laughs].'*

*'And the lady that I had to see, to start with, I started all this privately, she was a complete shyster'*

*'the dietician, I have an excellent one at Wallace's and he is very... skilled in basing his... opinions at every single price level. I am Waitrose...ehm under the market, so he will give me Waitrose recommendations, and he has never [emphasised] given me the last word, whatever is I said I can't do, he's always come up with another suggestion for you to try, which I have done. Uhm I'm very happy to listen to lots of different dieticians' uhm opinions so if I had been sent to the one in Location 1, I would have taken them quite seriously and listened, because without... it's a... defined area of nutrition, its actually lots of different bits, and I'm happy to listen to other opinions.'*

*'Yes, I would listen to every dietitian's opinion.'*

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*'I have a high opinion of the dieticians and it's a such a huge area of different types of food, textures and suggestions from all over the world that I would always, if I had gone to seeing the dietician in Location 1, I would have given them a very serious listening to.'*

*'I... didn't agree. I didn't agree with good reasons...and I still don't know why the other one would've be better... and cuz lost I've faith in that surgeon.'*

*'the psychiatrist, I just have a general opinion which I've probably had of them forever that I... don't think they're there for you, and I... uhm am hard with them then.'*

*'No, initially, I actually refused to go and see this... psycho-woman or she was psycho actually... Uhm... just because I thought it was a waste of my time. I won't be let anything up.'*

*'Uhm the... surgeon, the first surgeon that I have, he was a useless doctor'*

*'You need practical help from all the departmental nurses, to find out what is actually going to happen... because...uhm, in many instances I've heard they've met the surgeon just before... and they've never seen them again, they're just ward doctors after that, they never see the surgeon again. And the surgeon is just a facilitator for getting the keyhole surgery done. The departmental nurses, and in Wallace's case, one of the dietitians, they are actually leading the information process.'*

*'I don't like some of these psychologists one, the questions they try to get me in for, for how I would feel if I could eat again.'*

*'I also have an underlying medical condition which unfortunately the head of department at Wallace's was too incompetent to work out...'*

#### Sabina (4 references)

*'uhm and then told me how much weight she expected me to lose, and kind of told, like, if I said to her I want to lose this amount of weight or I want to be this dress size, she was saying, 'no you would never get there'.'*

*'Well... I kind of feel the dietitian, she wasn't sympathetic... and... and... like I said, she kept telling me, 'you're not going to meet this goal' and 'you'll never get there' and so there is something in my notes that says 'this patient thinks that she will get to a size, uhm UK dress size 10, but I've explained to her that this is unrealistic' and then, that went to the surgeon, and then when it got to the psychiatrist, also was like, with her. So, she had discussed it with me as well, saying 'do you still think that you're going to get to a size 10, this is unrealistic, that you think you're gonna get to size 10'.'*

*'so I don't know I feel like, as a service they need to be more... sympathetic and they need to like have... someone to like support us.'*

*'Yes. But she was wrong because I've lost more than that! So [laughs].'*

#### Rachel (3 references)

*'Well I think my role, is why I go to the support group, is to help others.'*

*'No, I thought the support was pretty good actually, in my particular case. I didn't feel that I have been left or had to cope with anything on my own. The staff were all very lovely, they always said, 'if you have a problem, give us a call', you know...'*

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*'Overall... I felt that I'd got a lot of input and attention. I felt that... the staff listened to me... they were sometimes had to be patient with me. If I wanted to talk for a long time about something, they never made me feel that your time is up, and we have to leave. Seeing the surgeon, my daughter came with me cuz they didn't, my family didn't want me to have this operation. I said my next surgeon appointment... and you come with, see what's involved. My daughter had a lot of questions, we must've been there 2 hours. Not one time did she say or not answer our questions. I felt that I'd got really excellent input from the Hillsdale, and from the staff that I met when I was there.'*

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