



Dear Sir/Madam

Up until 2019, when faced with an Urdu-speaking South Asian female complaining repeatedly of total body pain, my heart would sink. This patient would also almost invariably be complaining of low mood and in need of losing weight and, in a large amount of cases, either Diabetic or pre-diabetic.

My heart would sink because I knew from my experience as a GP for more than 20 years told me that this woman would almost certainly never engage with any standard service, no matter how local they claimed to offer the service to either help her lose weight or exercise more, talk about her life and low mood let alone talk about how to change her diet to improve her diabetes or reduce her risk of Diabetes. Bearing in mind that approximately 40% of our local population is from the BAME population, with the majority from South Asia, this constituted a massive proportion of our workload.

Then I came across Shamime Jan, who was part of the NESTA 100-day challenge towards the end of 2019, and she told me about Bollyfit and the work she was doing to support this population of women locally. It became increasingly clear that she had a major advantage over the other services in being able to engage with these women.

Since 2019, my heart has no longer sank when I meet these women and tell them about Bollyfit and what they can get from it. I rarely, if ever, bother to refer obese Urdu-speaking women to the Tier 2 and 3 weight management services, Psychological therapy services or Diabetic education services as I know it's a complete waste of my time and the patient's time, and instead, I hand out Shamime's contact details and tell them to phone Shamime to discuss what she can do to help.

I love it when women come back to see me and tell me, with a big smile on their faces, what they are doing with Bollyfit and how much better they feel.

I don't want to go back to 2019, so I would be keen to do all I can to support Shamime's application for funding for her service and her ever-growing number of coaches.

With regards

**Dominic Hyland**  
GP Ashcroft Surgery

