

Diabetes causes glucose levels in the blood to get too high. Over time this can cause serious harm to the eyes, heart and feet as well as to other parts of the body. Effective management of the condition can reduce the risk of problems and complications. The two main types of diabetes are:

Type 1- a lot less prevalent than type 2. It cannot be prevented through lifestyle.

Type 2- the risk of developing it can be reduced by lifestyle behaviours such as maintaining a healthy weight and diet, partaking in regular physical activity and not smoking. However, there are risk factors such as a family history of the condition, a person’s ethnicity and how old they are, that are not modifiable.

Why is this important?



Diabetes is impacted by inequalities with higher levels in more deprived areas. Obesity, unhealthy diet and lack of exercise can increase the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

What is the local context?



Higher percentages of Torbay GP patients aged 17+ have a diabetes diagnosis than in England (Fig 1). Obesity in adults is at significantly higher levels than England (Fig 5).

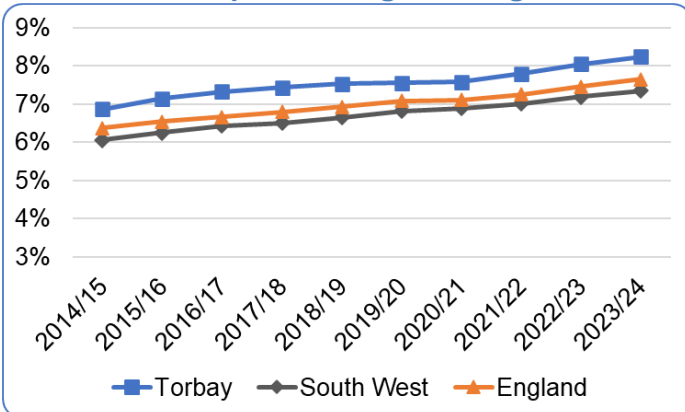
What should we do?



Encourage and enable people to live healthily. Raise awareness of diabetes symptoms and of services providing advice and support to people living with diabetes

GP patients: 8.2% of Torbay’s GP patients aged 17+ are recorded with a diabetes diagnosis in 2023/24 (Fig 1) which is significantly higher than the South West and England. This is the case for the last decade, and the three areas are on an increasing trend. Torbay is in the second highest quintile in England. Nationally there are higher percentages aged 17+ with a diabetes diagnosis living in the most deprived areas and lower percentages in the least deprived areas. As figures do not include undiagnosed diabetes they will be an underestimate.

Fig 1: Percentage of patients with diabetes, recorded on GP practice registers, aged 17+



Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID): [Public health profiles](#), from the Quality and Outcomes Framework

National Diabetes Audit: As part of this annual audit, data is collected from GP practices about those with diabetes. In Torbay, there were around 10,000 patients with diagnosed diabetes in 2023/24 (excluding gestational diabetes). This encompasses 800 with type 1 diabetes and 9,260 (92%) with type 2 diabetes (and other types excluding type 1).

Fig 2: Patients with type 2 diabetes (and others, excluding type 1), Torbay, 2023/24

Group	Registrations
Total number	9,260
Aged 0 to 39	3%
Aged 40 to 64	38%
Aged 65 to 79	41%
Aged 80+	18%
Female	43%
Male	57%

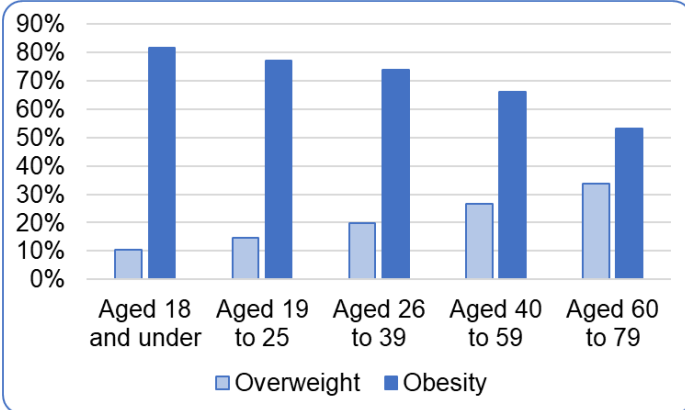
Source: NHS England- [National Diabetes Audit](#), the counts are rounded which affects percentages

Fig 2 shows percentages of registrations by age group and sex in Torbay. Over half are aged 65+. There is a higher proportion of registrations of this age range than nationally, but Torbay has a significantly older population than England which is likely the reason. Torbay has a higher proportion of males than females registered with type 2 diabetes (and others excluding type 1).

For type 1 diabetes, the National Diabetes Audit of 2023/24 shows almost 80% of Torbay’s registrations are aged under 65 (England is 85%), 36% of Torbay’s registrations are aged under 40.

Overweight and obesity: The National Diabetes Audit records the percentage diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in England who are overweight or living with obesity (Fig 3). In 2022/23 all age groups were more likely to be living with obesity than underweight, a healthy weight or overweight. However, younger people with type 2 were more likely to be living with obesity than older age groups- 82% aged 18 or under were in the obesity category reducing to 53% aged 60 to 79. The percentage who were overweight, however, rather than living with obesity, increased with age.

Fig 3: Percentage with type 2 diabetes- overweight and obesity, by age, England, 2022/23



Source: NHS England- [National Diabetes Audit](#)

Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes developing. Fig 4 shows that 64% of people aged 18+ in Torbay are recorded as overweight or living with obesity in 2022/23, the same as in England. In Fig 5 the percentage living with obesity is on a generally increasing trend as in the South West and England. Torbay is significantly higher than England for five of the eight years shown in terms of obesity.

Figs 4 and 5: Percentage aged 18+ who are overweight or living with obesity

Fig 4: Overweight including obesity

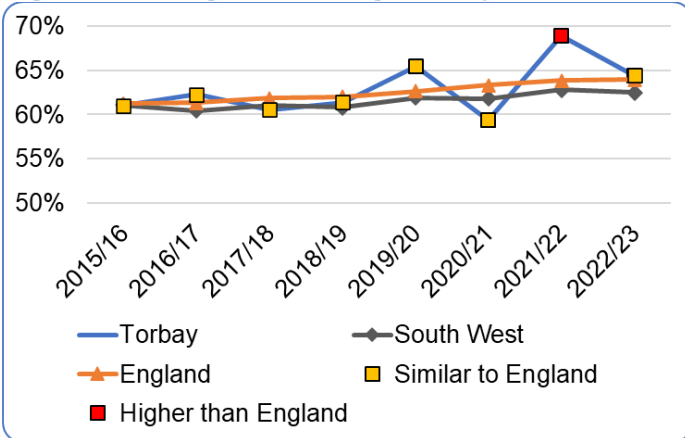
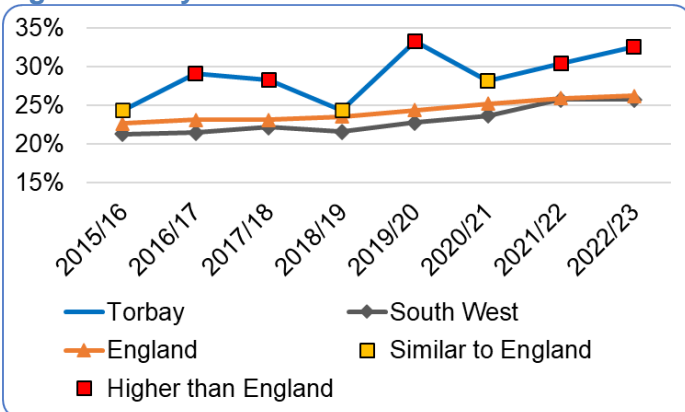


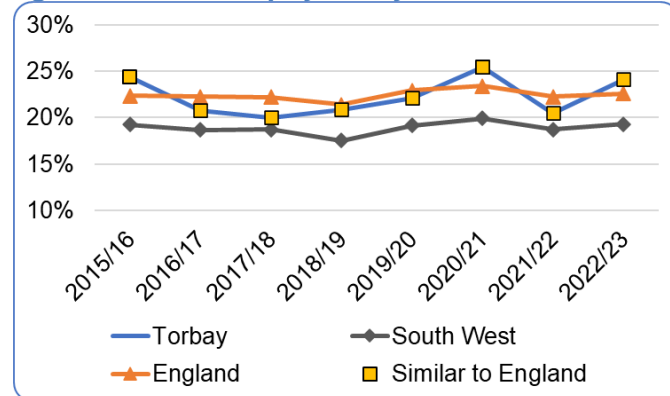
Fig 5: Obesity



Figs 4 & 5 source: OHID- [Public health profiles](#), based on Sport England's Active Lives Adult Survey

Physical inactivity: Lack of physical activity is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes. Physical inactivity is defined as less than 30 minutes of physical activity a week and the Active Lives Adult Survey reports on people aged 19+ doing less than 30 moderate intensity equivalent minutes of physical activity a week in bouts of 10 minutes or more. In Torbay over the eight years Fig 6 shows that 20 to 25% of those aged 19+ are physically inactive. This is broadly similar to England and has not improved over the period.

Fig 6: Lack of physical activity: Percentage aged 19+ who are physically inactive



Source: OHID- [Public health profiles](#), based on Sport England's Active Lives Adult Survey

Diet: Eating healthily can lower the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. The Active Lives Adult Survey asks people aged 16+ about their fruit and vegetable intake, recording whether they meet the 5-a-day fruit and vegetable consumption recommendations. In 2022/23, 35% of people in Torbay are reported as meeting the recommendations, statistically similar to England (31%), with the previous year being 37% in Torbay and 32% in England ([OHID](#)). This uses a new method which asks the question differently. Three years of data have been produced using the new method.

Smoking: Tobacco smoking is another lifestyle factor that increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Smoking prevalence of those aged 18+ is reported in the GP Patient Survey (GPPS) and is on a generally reducing trend in Torbay. These are people reporting as occasional or regular smokers. Levels are also reducing in the South West and England. Torbay's prevalence in 2022/23, calculated by [OHID](#) from GPPS data, was 16.3% compared to 13.6% in England.

References:

References/links to data used are throughout the profile.

Data was accessed in October 2024