"Support, Don't Blame"

Co-design and evaluate a pilot social media campaign to tackle type 2 diabetes stigma in the UK

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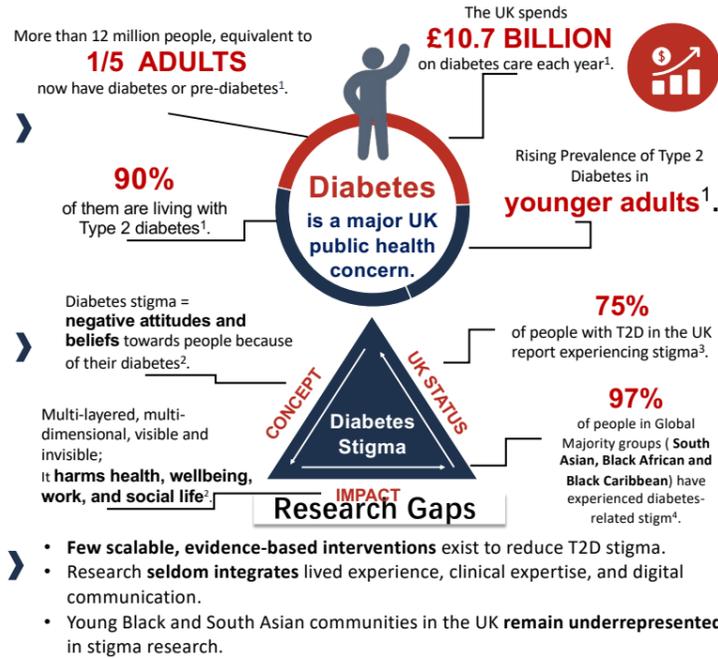
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Need: Type 2 diabetes stigma (T2D) is a major but under-recognised challenge, harming health and wellbeing, widening inequalities, and driving up NHS costs.

Action: This fellowship combined a narrative review and co-design workshops to produce a campaign creative brief, which guided social media influencers in launching a pilot *Support, Don't Blame* campaign, followed by evaluation of its impact.

Contributions: This fellowship shows how interdisciplinary collaboration linking public health, digital media, and behavioural science with diverse voices (including people with lived experience, healthcare professionals, communication experts, and influencers) can drive innovative strategies to reduce health-related stigma.

Future: Outputs from this pilot will directly inform a subsequent larger-scale study. Next fellowship project aims to engage underrepresented groups to co-design and validate a theory-driven, culturally tailored hybrid intervention, combining community participation, persuasive storytelling, and trusted influencer engagement to reduce T2D stigma.

1 Why it matters

More than 12 million people, equivalent to **1/5 ADULTS** now have diabetes or pre-diabetes[1].

The UK spends **£10.7 BILLION** on diabetes care each year[1].

90% of them are living with Type 2 diabetes[1].

Rising Prevalence of Type 2 Diabetes in **younger adults**[1].

Diabetes is a major UK public health concern.

Diabetes stigma = **negative attitudes and beliefs** towards people because of their diabetes[2].

75% of people with T2D in the UK report experiencing stigma[3].

Multi-layered, multi-dimensional, visible and invisible; It **harms health, wellbeing, work, and social life**[2].

97% of people in Global Majority groups (**South Asian, Black African and Black Caribbean**) have experienced diabetes-related stigm[4].

Diabetes Stigma — CONCEPT / UK STATUS / IMPACT — Research Gaps

- **Few scalable, evidence-based interventions** exist to reduce T2D stigma.
- Research **seldom integrates** lived experience, clinical expertise, and digital communication.
- Young Black and South Asian communities in the UK **remain underrepresented** in stigma research.

Objective: To co-design, launch, and evaluate a social media campaign that challenges type 2 diabetes stigma and strengthens positive, stigma-free public dialogue.
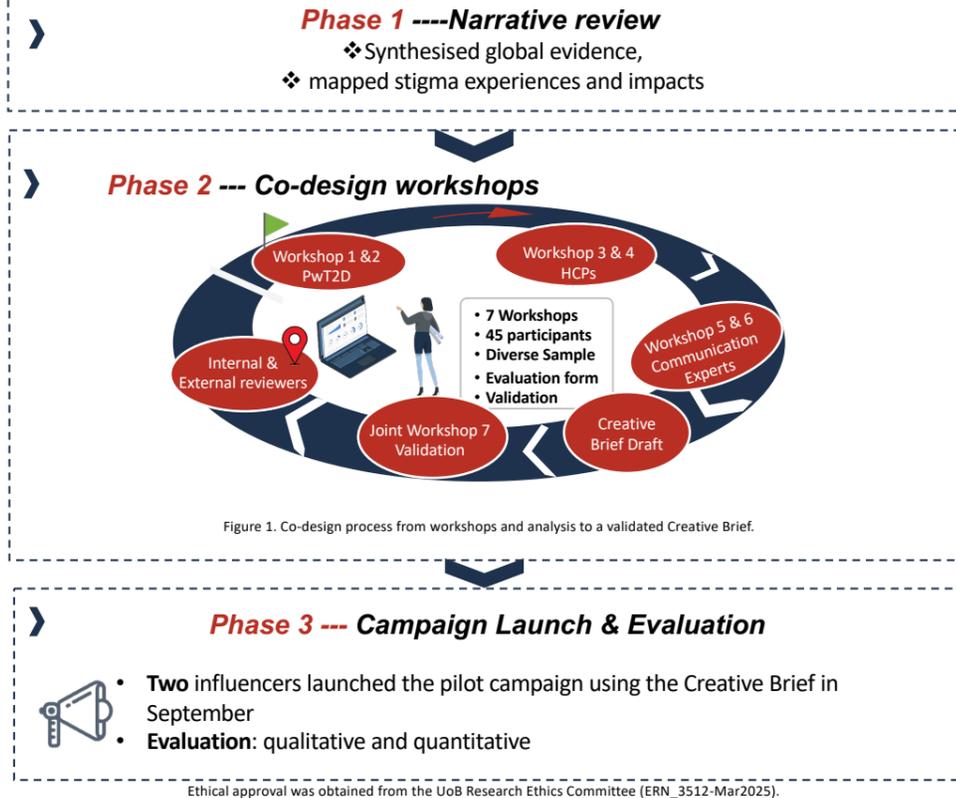
2 How we approach it

> **Phase 1 ----Narrative review**
> ❖ Synthesised global evidence,
> ❖ mapped stigma experiences and impacts

> **Phase 2 --- Co-design workshops**

Workshop 1 &2 PwT2D
Workshop 3 & 4 HCPs
Workshop 5 & 6 Communication Experts
Creative Brief Draft
Joint Workshop 7 Validation
Internal & External reviewers

- 7 Workshops
- 45 participants
- Diverse Sample
- Evaluation form
- Validation

Figure 1. Co-design process from workshops and analysis to a validated Creative Brief.

> **Phase 3 --- Campaign Launch & Evaluation**
> - **Two** influencers launched the pilot campaign using the Creative Brief in September
> - **Evaluation:** qualitative and quantitative

Ethical approval was obtained from the UoB Research Ethics Committee (ERN_3512-Mar2025).

4 IMPACT & CONTRIBUTION

Accepted Conference Contributions

- **SAPC** Society for Academic Primary Care — Society for Academic Primary Care South West Conference 2025 (SW SAPC 2025), 31 March -1 April, Oxford, UK. Poster
- **IDF 2025 BANGKOK** — International Diabetes Federation (IDF) World Diabetes Congress 2025, 7-10 April, Bangkok, Thailand. E-poster
- **WORLD SOCIAL MARKETING CONFERENCE** — World Social Marketing Conference(WSMC 2025), 5–7 November, Alicante, Spain. Oral Presentation

Published Paper and book contract

- THE LANCET Diabetes & Endocrinology — First Author
- nutrients — Co-author
- CHINA CDC WEEKLY CCDCweekly — First Author
- Taylor & Francis Group an informa business — Author

Webinars and invited talks/lectures

- NIHR School for Public Health Research — Online Webinar
- Centre—UB Understanding Human Behaviour — Online Webinar
- OUTSTANDING YOUNG SCHOLARS SOCIETY UK 英国杰出青年人才协会 — Invited Talk
- Invited Lecture

Membership in professional societies

- EASD Early Career Academy — Mentee
- THE BRITISH ACADEMY EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER NETWORK — Member
- PCST The Global Network for Science Communication — Committee Member
- International Diabetes Federation — Fellow

3 What we achieved

> *Co-design solutions, empower underrepresented voices, and foster inclusive, stigma-free communities.*

SUPPORT DON'T BLAME — Creative Brief — Towards a Stigma-Free Future for Type 2 Diabetes — ESRC & CENTRE-UB Fellowship Project Aug 2025

My client checked her blood sugar 12.6 mmol/L

SUPPORT, DON'T BLAME: GLOBAL STORIES AGAINST DIABETES STIGMA

Media activity
Start Date: November 1, 2025
End Date: November 30, 2025
Location: London, England, United Kingdom

926 events in 126 countries

World Diabetes Day Campaign

Audiences / Values / Tones / Key Messages / Media Strategies / Objectives / Slogan / Language Guide

Research Website

References
1 Diabetes UK. (2025). Diabetes is Serious: Our 10 Year Vision for Diabetes in the UK. London: Diabetes UK.
2 Diabetes UK. (2023). Tackling Diabetes Stigma: Position Statement. London: Diabetes UK.
3 Diabetes UK. (2024, March 21). 86% of people with type 1 and 75% of people with type 2 experience judgement for their condition. Diabetes UK News & Views.
4 Diabetes UK. (2024, June 20). 97% of people in non-white communities have experienced diabetes-related stigma. Diabetes UK News & Views.