

# Gretton Homes' Unique Success with Obesity

Submitted by: jmm PR

Tuesday, 15 June 2004

---

## GRETTON HOMES' UNIQUE SUCCESS WITH OBESITY

Following the recent influential House of Commons report on the obesity 'epidemic' the Government is being urged to act to halt the rise in obesity in our country. On present trends, the report mentions that obesity will soon surpass smoking as the greatest cause of premature death. It could bring levels of sickness that will place enormous strains on the NHS, perhaps even making a public health funded NHS unsustainable.

In stark contrast, Gretton Homes has a unique and proven track record in reducing and maintaining weight loss in a rare and widely misunderstood form of obesity known as Prader Willi Syndrome (PWS). Gretton Homes is based in Northamptonshire and was conceived in 1982; it has eight homes with over 70 residents, nearly all with PWS.

Those suffering from PWS are widely misunderstood and their obesity perceived due to laziness or over indulgence, however, this is not so.

PWS is a rare genetic disorder affecting 1 in 20,000 people, regardless of gender or race. It is an accident of birth due to a deletion affecting chromosome 15. PWS is a genetic disorder that causes a myriad of symptoms including poor muscle tone, delayed motor development, learning difficulties and immature social and emotional behaviour, sleep apnoea, short stature, speech and language disabilities, obsessional and compulsive behaviour to name just a few. However, the most obvious manifestation of PWS is the uncontrollable weight gain caused by an insatiable appetite, often resulting in excessive eating, and as a consequence, life-threatening obesity. In a cruel biological union, a slow metabolism and decreased muscle tone exacerbates the weight problem and sets the sufferer in a downward spiral towards ill health, and sadly for those who do not receive the kind of care offered by Gretton Homes, premature death.

Maurice Reynolds, Senior Partner of Gretton Homes was recently awarded an MBE for his many years of tireless work and achievements with people afflicted with PWS. The huge lack of knowledge throughout the world on PWS led Mr. Reynolds to devise a successful programme to manage the vast array of symptoms associated with PWS. The success of the programme has dramatically improved the quality of life of sufferers and has increased their life expectancy significantly. Prior to research into the syndrome, individuals with PWS became tremendously overweight and invariably died in their early teens. Today, however, Gretton Homes boasts success with residents of 50 years' of age.

As Maurice Reynolds explains, "There is no known cure for PWS, nor is there any effective medication or medical procedure. An early diagnosis gives parents the opportunity to manage their child's diet and avoid obesity and its related problems from the start. However, a multi-disciplinary approach is required to successfully manage this debilitating syndrome. At Gretton Homes we have achieved phenomenal success with such an approach, and in particular with weight and behaviour modification. It is not about over indulgence or laziness, there are distinct medical problems, which we recognise and have in place a programme to manage very successfully. We have had many successes including Tara, Richard and Ian, all whom were admitted to Gretton Homes weighing in at between 20-30 stone. After a period, which varies

from person to person, all had lost at least 50% of their body weight. Reducing the weight alone, and maintaining it, means we have improved their quality of life

, and as a direct result, life expectancy is considered to be normal, provided that they remain with us or receive a similar model of care. We also have strong anecdotal evidence that suggests there is a clear link between weight loss and a reduction in challenging behaviours, in particular temper outbursts.

In terms of numbers, we manage just the tip of this iceberg and realise that there are many more people out there with this debilitating condition. PWS needs to be recognised so it can be addressed and managed. We have the knowledge, experience and proven success to manage PWS, and at the same time offer individuals a semi-independent lifestyle.”

Gretton Homes has given advice and assistance to providers from Ireland and Germany and others who have since set up homes for people with PWS in their respective countries. Gretton Homes has set the standard for many other providers who have since established homes in the UK and abroad.

Mr. Reynolds concludes, “This is a very misunderstood syndrome and there is a tremendous amount of ignorance about it. My objective is to continue to expand our work, possibly to offer residential care for children, and also to help other sufferers and ensure that their problems are recognised, supported and hopefully one day cured, but this can only be achieved by a greater recognition and understanding of the condition by Health professionals, Social Workers and Government.”

Further information on Gretton Homes and the Prader Willi Syndrome visit the website at [www.gretton-homes.co.uk](http://www.gretton-homes.co.uk) or telephone 01536 770325.

Ends.

Image available of Mr. Maurice Reynolds MBE, Senior Partner of Gretton Homes accepting his MBE in October 2003.

For press information and image please contact;

Jacqueline Mariani

JM Marketing,

39 Cobden Street

Kettering NN16 8ER

Telephone: 01536 414555

Fax: 01536 414333

Email: [jmmarketing@virgin.net](mailto:jmmarketing@virgin.net).

For more information on Gretton Homes please contact press agency JM Marketing or Myles Kelly at Gretton Homes 3 High Street, Gretton, Northants NN17 3DE Telephone: 01536 770325

15th June 2004