

One in five adults has or is at risk of having type 2 d...

Published: January 12, 2026, 11:43 pm

As the [Guardian reports](#) this morning:

One in five adults in the UK are now living with diabetes or pre-diabetes, according to “alarming” data that exposes the impact of soaring obesity levels, increasingly unhealthy diets and a “broken” food environment.

In total, 12.2 million people are affected, the data analysis from Diabetes UK shows, including 4.6 million with diagnosed diabetes, 1.3 million with undiagnosed diabetes, and 6.3 million with non-diabetic hyperglycaemia, also known as pre-diabetes. It is the highest total ever recorded.

The curse of highly addictive, sugar-laden food that is being created by the food industry in the UK to ensure that we crave products that maximise the profits of the companies producing them whilst massively harming our health is a scandal worse now than that of the promotion of smoking before measures to address that issue were introduced.

The vast majority of the 12 million people with type 2 diabetes, or pre-diabetes, need not have that condition. Changes to their diet would cure them of this condition within weeks in a great many cases. That is because type 2 diabetes is not an illness that is caught. It is an illness systemically imposed on people by an industry intent on creating addiction to its products. And it is not a chronic condition. It is almost always curable.

However, there are three obstacles to curing this problem. This would not only massively improve the quality of vast numbers of people's lives in this country but would also solve the entire capacity problem in the NHS and simultaneously massively reduce the cost of that service, ending the supposed crisis in government funding that we are supposed to be facing to the extent that austerity is required.

The first is the power of corporate lobbying by those creating this addiction. This lobbying is not only aimed at the government but also at us via advertising.

The second is the power of the big pharmaceutical sector, which wants the

perpetuation of this situation so that it can sell massively profitable drugs like Wegovy and Ozempic. Curing diabetes is the last thing it wants.

Third, we have a supine government. As [I noted recently](#), in November, the House of Lords produced an impressive report suggesting that the quality of food in the UK had to be transformed to tackle this issue. When doing so, they suggested that the food industry should not be involved in setting that new food policy precisely because they were the problem that had to be tackled and could not, therefore, dictate the solution. But, our government has rejected this advice, suggesting that the food industry is integral to food policy in this country, perpetuating the problem as a result.

We could adopt the Lords' recommendations. We could take the food industry and its harmful practices out of the process of creating food policy.

We could ban the advertising of addictive foodstuffs that do harm.

We could change the algorithms that manage GP practices and their rewards in the UK, which currently encourage the management but not curtailment of diabetes.

We could change the priorities of the NHS so that it seeks to eliminate diabetes and not manage it.

We could divert funding to people to ensure that they can afford genuinely nutritious food.

We could do all those things, but our government would rather we suffer so that big business might profit.

It's hard to avoid the conclusion that they are profoundly corrupt as well as utterly indifferent to the well-being of people in this country.