The challenge
Obesity

• A severe, chronic, relapsing disease
• High costs – to the individual and to society, including the health care system
• Relatively new to the health care system in Australia – which has adapted too slowly to the implications for health service delivery
• Many health students and health professionals show weight bias
• Most health professionals are untrained, or poorly trained, in assessing and managing obesity and its complications

Challenges in the 21st century:

- More socially diverse patients with more chronic conditions
- Patient care now demands “unprecedented teamwork”
- Expanding functions of health professionals – “super-specialisation, prevention and complex care management”

Figure 2: Emerging challenges to health systems

→ Highly relevant for the training of health professionals to care for people affected by obesity

Health professional training in obesity is poor

• Few data on undergraduate medical education. Even less on training of nursing and allied health professional students.

• Audit of obesity teaching in Australian universities in 2006:
  – Medical students: Median 7 h [range 5-30 h]
  – Nutrition & dietetic students: Median 15 h [6-22]

• Royal Australian College of General Practitioners – only specialist college in Australia to include obesity in the prescribed curriculum

• Surveys and qualitative studies of primary and secondary level care medical practitioners: feel poorly prepared to manage patients with obesity

Hayden M et al. MJA 2006; 185:293-4.
What Australian family doctors say are the barriers to primary care management of paediatric obesity

- Lack of time
- Lack of reimbursement
- Lack of parent/patient motivation
- Lack of effective interventions
- Lack of support services
- Complex/difficult problem
- Parent/child sensitivity
- Inadequate training

Results of focus groups with Australian family doctors (general practitioners)
Table 1: Australian paediatricians’ self-reported competencies in managing obesity and its comorbidities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived competency</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Very (3)</th>
<th>Quite (2)</th>
<th>A little (1)</th>
<th>Not at all (0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Obesity management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing child’s weight when a parent broaches it</td>
<td>2.6 (0.6)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broaching issue of an obese child’s weight yourself</td>
<td>2.4 (0.7)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing an obese child</td>
<td>2.2 (0.7)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing a child with obesity</td>
<td>1.7 (0.7)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a difference to an obese child’s weight</td>
<td>1.1 (0.6)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comorbidity management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstructive sleep apnoea</td>
<td>1.7 (0.9)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>1.6 (0.8)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying and social difficulties</td>
<td>1.6 (0.8)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulin resistance and/or pre-diabetes</td>
<td>1.1 (0.9)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>1.3 (0.8)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatty liver disease</td>
<td>0.9 (0.8)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyslipidaemia</td>
<td>0.9 (0.7)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Obesity and the chronic disease care pyramid

Level 1
70-80% of affected people
Self-care & community based care

Level 2
High risk patients
Care management

Level 3
Complex patients
Case management

Tertiary care facilities & special obesity clinics; bariatric surgery specialist teams; key worker case manages & joins up care

Secondary level care facilities; multidisciplinary teams; group programs

Self-care supported by general practitioners, other 1st care, group programs

Primary prevention & health promotion
Level 1
70-80% of affected people
Self-care & community based care

Level 2
High risk patients
Care management

Level 3
Tertiary care facilities & special obesity clinics; bariatric surgery specialist teams; key worker case manages & joins up care

Secondary level care facilities; multidisciplinary teams; group programs

Self-care supported by general practitioners, other 1st care, group programs

Primary prevention & health promotion

Training of students and ongoing health professional education is required for all levels of service delivery
Possible solutions
Challenges in the 21st century:

- More socially diverse patients with more chronic conditions
- Patient care now demands “unprecedented teamwork”
- Expanding functions of health professionals – “super-specialisation, prevention and complex care management”

Solutions include:

- Flexible, competency-based curricula
- Education across professions
- Break-down of traditional professional silos

Develop, evaluate and provide health professional training - 1

• A range of types of clinicians (students and professionals):
  • Nurses and allied health professionals are key
  • Includes:
    • Those managing obesity co-morbidities e.g. sleep apnoea, heart disease, diabetes, fatty liver disease, orthopaedic complications …
    • Those using therapies that cause obesity e.g. steroid therapy, anti-psychotics …

• For most, it will be short, modular, on-line/accessible training

• This could be done in a range of ways ….
Undergraduate curricula AND postgraduate training

Courses at different levels of intensity:
- Short on-line modular training e.g. Weight4KIDS (see next)
- SCOPE – Specialist Certification of Obesity Professional Education: World Obesity Federation
- M Med (Paed): Obesity Unit of study, USyd; M Metab Medicine, USyd

Registrar/Fellow/Advanced Trainee training positions

Training positions for other health professionals
On-line training of clinicians (nurses, allied health, doctors …) who see children and adolescents - to monitor weight status, raise the issue of obesity and provide initial and more detailed advice

→ Weight4KIDS training modules

*Developed by CHW clinicians with SCHN & WSLHD*
Prevention: R Raise the Issue

Remember...

When raising the issue of a child or adolescents weight with their family, it is helpful to remember:

- one in four school aged children are overweight or obese so it is a very common problem.
- the more often you give healthy lifestyle advice and routine measurements of height, weight and BMI-for-age in your practice, the easier it will be to talk about lifestyle changes and weight related issues in the future.

To reveal the key points, click each bow of string to the right.
Stature

To take an accurate height measurement, follow this procedure:

Remove the client’s shoes and any head-covering.

Stand client in the middle of the board with their back to the board.

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

To display information on each step, click each image.
Welcome

This module provides additional resources to support the Weight4KIDS program. The information is intended for both families and health professionals.

The range of pamphlets provided can be downloaded in PDF file format and printed for use in the health professionals clinic to assist in educating families on healthy lifestyle behaviours.

The provided resources include:

- factsheets
- pamphlet downloads
- helpful websites
- hard copies of literature for mail order.

Click Next to continue.
Keep it Simple

There's no need to create a complicated weight loss plan. Even the smallest changes can achieve some weight loss.

You should create SMART goals.

Don't try and change everything at once.

This can be overwhelming and lead to failure.

Click Next to continue.
Health professional training

• Can we see a future when ....
  – People with obesity are treated with dignity and respect in the health system
  – All health professional students, and all clinicians and health promotion staff, are able to access relevant training as needed and feel confident in:
    • raising the issue of obesity with sensitivity
    • monitoring the problem
    • helping people find the support they need to tackle the issue?
Thank you!

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- Cochrane Review team
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