

Behavior and Obesity: The Perception of Healthcare Professionals Concerning the Role of Behavior on Obesity

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Abstract : Objective: Obesity is epidemic, affecting all societies and cultures. Most serious medical illnesses are attributed to obesity. For this reason, all healthcare systems worldwide have focused on obesity for both intervention and prevention. However, there is scientific evidence supporting that obesity is treatable through implementing different modalities of interventions. They include biological interventions like medications and bariatric surgeries and behavioral interventions. It seems healthcare professionals may suggest the quick and the easiest interventions for obesity like surgery, ignoring other modalities that might require efforts from their sides and patients as well. Searching on the onset, progression and prevention, behavior plays a major role. As a result, psychological interventions have become increasingly core for intervention and prevention of obesity. They are effective and cost effective in dealing with obesity. Methods: A questionnaire describing the role of behavior on obesity and the way it can be prevented and treated was distributed to a group of health professionals who are dealing with obesity e.g. bariatric surgeons, bariatric physicians, psychologists, health educators, nurses and social workers. Results: 88% of healthcare professionals believed that behavior plays a major role on the onset and progression of obesity, 95% of them recognized that obesity can be prevented with consideration for behavior factors. A major proportion (87%) of the respondents see that psychological interventions are effective and cost effective in treating obesity. Conclusions: It optimistically appears that the majority of healthcare professionals believe that behavior is a key component in understanding, preventing and treating obesity. This outcome may help in developing specific training courses for healthcare professionals, who are dealing with obesity concerning the way they can treat patients behaviorally and, moreover, educating the community.

Keywords : behavior, obesity, healthcare provider, psychological interventions

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