

4, March 2015

Re: Adult Weight Management Programme by the Waikato Regional Diabetes Service

Dear Doctors,

This letter is to inform you that the Adult Weight Management Programme (AWMP) is instituting some changes to its referral criteria and its programme.

Firstly, we are expanding the referral criteria to adult patients with a BMI of 35 or greater who have obesity related illness(es). Listed below is our inclusion and exclusion criteria. Priority will be given to those who stand to benefit the most from the programme (ie. greatest amount of co-morbidities with the greatest potential for improvement).

INCLUSION CRITERIA:

- Obesity-Related Illnesses such as:
 - Type 2 Diabetes
 - IFG (FBS \geq 5.6 mmol) or IGT (2 hr post GTT \geq 7.8 mmol)
 - HBA1c \geq 42 mmol/mol
 - Obstructive Sleep Apnoea
 - Non-Alcoholic Steatohepatitis
 - Needing to lose weight to undergo surgery
 - Hypertriglyceridaemia
 - Hypertension related to obesity
 - Other
- BMI \geq 35
- Age 18 years or older
- Desire to lose weight and is willing to make permanent life changes to achieve sustained weight loss
- Feels that he/she needs to and could lose weight with the support of the programme
- Adherent to self blood sugar monitoring (when appropriate), medications, medical testing, and appointments
- Able to attend all weekly group sessions and appointments
- Has not previously attended the Adult Weight Management Programme.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA:

- Pregnancy
- Lactation
- Conditions with a high catabolic state
- Active illicit drug or alcohol abuse/dependency or not treated for a sufficient duration to prove stable abstinence (minimum of 1 year)
- Unstable mental illness or mental illness not treated for a sufficient duration to prove stability (minimum of 1 year)
- Significant risk issues to self or others, and absence of appropriate support system
- Active bulimia that is not treated or not treated for a sufficient duration to prove stable abstinence of bulimic behaviour (minimum of 1 year)

- Serious interpersonal issues which would disrupt patient group sessions (e.g. difficulty managing anger, violent and anti-social behaviour)
- Deficits in intellectual functioning to such a degree that patient group education would be inappropriate for them
- Does not attend appointments.

The Adult Weight Management Programme reviews progress on an annual basis. In the past, we used Optifast meal replacement for 6 weeks along with group education. The average amount of weight loss within the first 6 months of the programme was 11% with some people losing up to 27% of their baseline weight. There was some weight regain after the first 6 months such that the average weight loss 2 years after starting on the programme was 7%. To improve a person's ability to maintain weight loss, we have augmented the behavioural education aspect of the programme to strongly incorporate the principles of mindfulness and acceptance commitment therapy in the past 14 months. We did not use Optifast in the programme during this recent time period. Although the programme is not tailored for those who meet DSM criteria for an eating disorder, the approaches of mindfulness and acceptance commitment therapy can be helpful for people who eat secondary to emotion, comfort, or habit. The incorporation of mindfulness and acceptance commitment therapy into the programme has shown that weight loss is maintained at 1 year so far with a 10% loss of visceral fat.

Therefore, to further improve outcomes, the second change to the programme is the re-incorporation of the temporary use of Optifast within the first part of the education programme to augment weight loss. This will be combined with the recently augmented education programme which incorporates mindfulness and acceptance commitment therapy principles into the nutritional, activity/exercise, and health management education to help maintain weight loss.

The programme consists of weekly to fortnightly group education sessions for the first 5 months and medical and exercise/activity assessments at the beginning, 3 months, 6 months, 12 months, and 24 months (end) of the programme. All patients are required to engage in all components of the programme (including the physical activity).

Patients who would not be appropriate for group education should not be referred to the programme. These patients can be referred to the Waikato Hospital Dietetic Services Weight Loss Clinic instead.

Please also keep in mind that patients will only be able to go through the group programme ONCE. Therefore, if the patient is not committed to undergo such a programme, it is best to defer the referral to a more appropriate time or consider referral to another service.

Please use our referral form when referring to our service.

Best regards,

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Waikato Regional Diabetes Service