

Needs and challenges of the payor and regulatory community towards integrating obesity into a chronic care framework

HPR131

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INTRODUCTION

Obesity acts as the gateway disease to all Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). As the impact of NCDs continues to increase, projected to exceed 70% of global mortality, there's an urgent need to improve the management of people living with obesity.

OBJECTIVE

Our objective was to examine the needs and challenges faced by payors and regulatory bodies in integrating obesity into a chronic care framework.

METHODS

Cross-sectional qualitative study

- Payor and regulatory community of Europe
- Purposive sampling between 14/10/2023 – 15/03/2024
- Thematic analysis

RESULTS

- 9 Payors / 6 Regulators
- 11 different European countries

“And then indeed, we can say the budget that we give for cancer and the budget that we only spend for obesity, is that proportional to each other? And then I say very honestly no.” (participant 5)

“As long as you don't define it as an NCD. You would have some risk of severe stigma that would lead to this being individualised and seen as something that people could sort of solve themselves.” (participant 1)

Challenges	Needs
Structure healthcare system <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reactive healthcare system- Difficult to predict effect of prevention- Obesity is not registered as a diagnosis	Structure healthcare system <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Health promotion centres- Obesity chronic care pathway- The need for tools to predict the efficacy of prevention interventions- Obesity needs to be registered in community settings and hospitals to identify the impact and cost
Political challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Obesogenic environment- Don't want to intervene with individual freedom of choice- The power of lobbying- Political willingness- No reimbursement for lifestyle conditions	Political needs <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Classify obesity as a policy-prioritised NCD- Obesity impact assessment into policy decisions- Create a non-obesogenic environment- Combat obesity as we did with tobacco/butter war
Obesity treatment and management <ul style="list-style-type: none">- No clear treatment guidelines- Lack of cost-effective treatment- Lack of follow-up indicators- Lack of obesitologists- Empowerment of patients- Pharmacological obesity treatment without follow-up- Effective treatment could trigger a vicious feedback loop- High out of pocket payments	Obesity treatment and management <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need for clear referral guidelines- Anti-obesity drugs only for patients in a certain care pathway
Obesity perceptions <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Obesity not perceived as a disease- The new trend to prevent discrimination against obesity may inadvertently promote its acceptance	

CONCLUSIONS

Tackling obesity, which acts as a gateway disease to a range of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) could be a step forward towards a preventive and cost-efficient healthcare system. The following strategies could help reduce the healthcare and socio-economic costs associated NCDs:

- Incorporation of an obesity care pathway
- Registration of obesity in different care setting
- Obesity impact assessment into policy decisions

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