



Canadian Obesity Network – Halifax Chapter (CON YHZ) Public Statement

OBESITY IS RECOGNIZED BY THE CANADIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION AS A CHRONIC DISEASE

Obesity is:

- A progressive condition;
- A leading cause of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, osteoarthritis, cancer and other health problems;
- A source of pervasive stigma that contributes to an increase in morbidity and mortality;
- Associated with inequities in employment, healthcare and education.

The recommended treatments for obesity currently include access to:

- Family doctors;
- Specialists and interdisciplinary teams for behavioural treatment;
- Medically supervised weight-management programs including meal replacements;
- Medications that promote weight loss;
- Obesity surgery;
- Treatment and support over the long term (similar to other conditions such as diabetes and hypertension).

The Canadian Obesity Network just released (April 2017) the “Report Card on Access to Obesity Treatments for Adults in Canada”, which reveals that:

- The provincial government of Nova Scotia does not recognize obesity as a chronic disease;
- Only 2 MDs in Nova Scotia have completed certification in obesity management;
- There are very few interdisciplinary teams for obesity management and no formal teams in Nova Scotia;
- The Nova Scotia health plan does not cover meal replacements or interdisciplinary care for obesity;
- Nova Scotia drug plans do not cover obesity medication;
- In Nova Scotia there is very limited access to bariatric surgery for morbid obesity;
- In Nova Scotia, 1 in 1,312 of eligible people receive obesity surgery, the lowest rate in Canada. In comparison, the rate in NB is 1 in 168 and the rate in NF is 1 in 390;
- Nova Scotia has the longest obesity surgery wait times in Canada.

Given the high rate of obesity in Nova Scotia, CON-YHZ seeks the opportunity to discuss this issue and explore potential solutions.

See:

Canadian Obesity Network – <http://www.obesitynetwork.ca>

Link to Report Card on Access to Obesity Treatment for Adults in Canada 2017 –

<http://www.obesitynetwork.ca/canadians-lack-access-to-obesity-treatments-and-support-report-card-4-25-2017>