

Title: DOM (UK)'s submission of evidence to the Government's - Health Select Committee into Obesity - summary

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Summary of Evidence submitted by Dietitians in Obesity Management (UK)

Dietitians in Obesity Management (UK) are an Interest Group of the British Dietetic Association. It aims to facilitate the development of dietetic best practice, within the context of integrated care, in order to improve prevention and management and thereby reduce the impact of obesity in the United Kingdom.

Summary of Evidence

Obesity has a major impact on health and the economy. The escalating trend in obesity is a cause for concern and action is needed to halt its progression. The main causes of obesity are linked to changes in diet and levels of physical activity over the past few decades. Responsibility for preventing and treating obesity lies with all elements of society, from individuals to the NHS, education services, the food industry, leisure services, commercial organisations and the government. Action needs to be well co-ordinated with clear messages reaching the general public.

Obesity needs to be recognised as a chronic disease requiring lifelong management and weight management programmes must incorporate weight maintenance strategies. There needs to be responsible multi-agency programmes in place to help treat and prevent obesity. Research funding needs to be available to guide effective action.

Dietitians working in Obesity Management (UK) [DOM (UK)] have a key contribution to make to development of obesity strategies at national level and dietitians working in community posts can provide expertise at local level to Primary Care Trusts. Dietitians working in clinical settings provide expert guidance to individual patients, as well as playing an important role as part of multi-disciplinary team approaches.

The dietetic profession are key players in combating the obesity epidemic.