

Motivators for and barriers to successful weight loss: a survey of people with obesity and healthcare professionals in the Asia-Pacific region



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<https://sciencehub.novonordisk.com/ico/2022/Boonyavarakul.html>

Background and Aim

- According to The World Obesity Atlas 2022, it is estimated that one billion people worldwide will be living with obesity by 2030, potentially rendering 1 in 5 women and 1 in 7 men impacted by the burden of living with obesity.¹
- The greatest number of people living with obesity are in low- and middle-income countries, increasing significantly since 2010.¹
- Over the past decades, the advancement of scientific understanding has led to obesity being increasingly recognized as a chronic disease requiring long-term management. However, barriers to the optimal management of obesity remain.
- This study examines perceptions of motivators and barriers to weight loss from the perspectives of people with obesity (PwO) and healthcare professionals (HCPs) in Asia-Pacific countries.

Methods

- A cross-sectional online survey was conducted with 10,429 PwO and 1,901 HCPs in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Survey participants were recruited from online panels to complete the survey between April 14, 2022, and May 23, 2022.
- Inclusion criteria:
 - PwO: Age ≥ 18 , current BMI of ≥ 25 kg/m² (≥ 27 kg/m² in Singapore), not currently pregnant, does not participate in intense fitness or body building program.
 - HCPs: Physicians with primary specialty in general practice, family practice, internal medicine, or other relevant specialty (varied by country); spends at least 50% of time in patient medical management; in practice for at least 2 years; saw ≥ 100 patients in past month; saw ≥ 10 patients who have obesity (BMI ≥ 25 kg/m²; BMI ≥ 27 kg/m² for Singapore) in past month.
- Two surveys, one each for PwO and HCPs, were developed with a multidisciplinary panel of experts (Steering Committee).
- Survey content was similar across the two surveys to allow for comparisons and identification of gaps between PwO and HCPs.
- Both surveys were offered in both English and the native languages of each country.
- Descriptive statistical analyses (means, frequencies, percentages) were performed with the aggregated data for each respondent group using Q Research Software for Windows 23.*

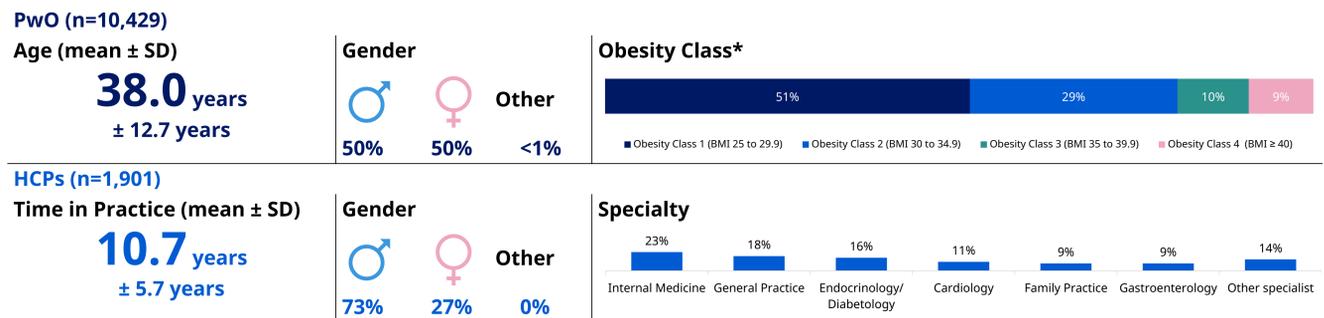
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Results

- The characteristics of the study sample are described in **Figure 1**.
- Both PwO and HCPs had similar perceptions regarding weight loss motivators. Motivators for PwO included wanting to be fit, feel better physically, be more confident, or to fit into a smaller clothing size (**Figure 2**). Other motivators were general health concerns and encouragement from family or friends (**Figure 2**).
- According to HCPs, patients' weight loss motivators included wanting to feel better physically, general health concerns, wanting to be more confident, a specific medical event or diagnosis, and wanting to be more fit (**Figure 3**).
- Only 4% of PwO said they had no desire to lose weight. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of PwO report having made at least one serious weight loss attempt in their adult life, with an average of three attempts (**Figure 4**).
- Both PwO and HCPs strongly agreed that there are multiple barriers to weight loss. The greatest weight loss barriers for PwO as compared to HCPs were lack of exercise, unhealthy eating habits, preference for unhealthy food, and lack of motivation (**Figure 5**).
- There were several top barriers to weight loss reported by HCPs that were less of an issue for PwO: mental health/emotional state (61% vs. 48%, respectively), limited mobility (60% vs. 44%), lack of understanding of obesity (60% vs. 42%), other health conditions (59% vs. 44%), and nature of job/employment (57% vs. 48%).
- Only about half of PwO (46%) and HCPs (51%) strongly agreed that genetics was a barrier to weight loss.

Results, continued

Figure 1. People with Obesity and Healthcare Professional Characteristics



*Obesity Classes for Singapore are defined as: Obesity Class 1 (27 to 31.9); Obesity Class 2 (32 to 36.9); Obesity Class 3 (37 to 41.9); Obesity Class 4 (42+). SD = standard deviation

Figure 2. PwO's Motivators for Weight Loss (top 6 responses)

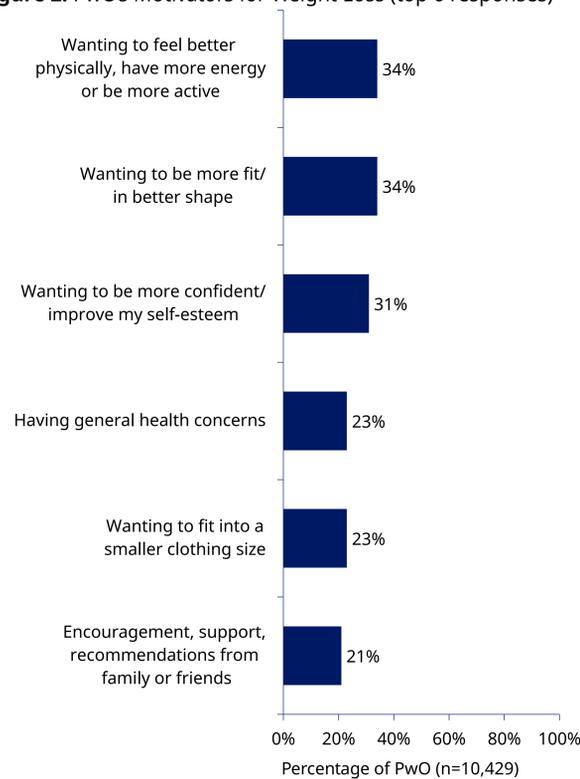


Figure 3. HCPs' Perceived Motivators for PwO Weight Loss (top 6 responses)

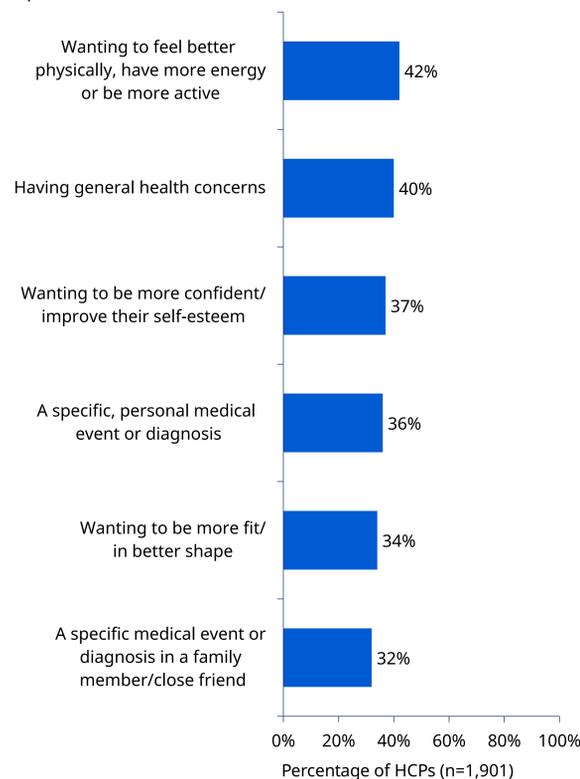


Figure 4. PwO's Weight Loss Attempts

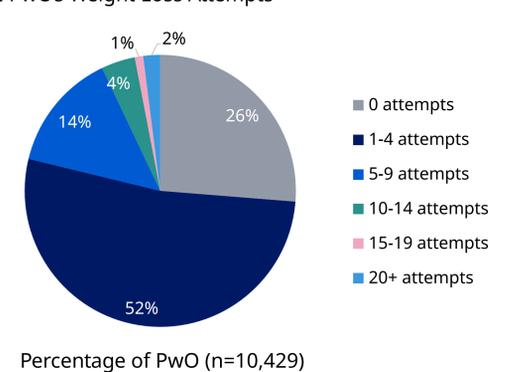
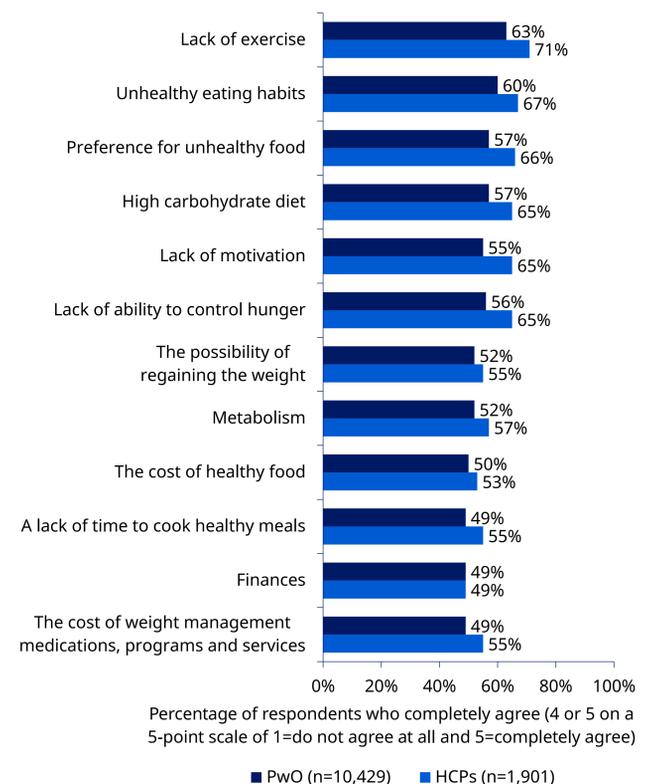


Figure 5. Weight Loss Barriers (top 12 barriers listed by PwO)



Note: some statement shortened for brevity

Summary and Conclusions

- For PwO, feeling physically better, more fit, and more confident were their top weight loss motivators. Although HCPs largely agreed with PwO, they perceived general health concerns and specific medical diagnoses to be greater motivators for weight loss than did PwO.
- HCPs and PwO also generally agreed that lack of exercise and unhealthy eating habits were the top barriers to successful weight loss, but HCPs viewed lack of motivation as a greater barrier than did PwO themselves.
- Awareness of the importance of biological factors as barriers to obesity management were similarly low among both PwO and HCPs.
- Barriers and motivators to obesity management should be equally addressed for optimal obesity management.

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(1) https://www.worldobesityday.org/assets/downloads/World_Obesity_Atlas_2022_WEB.pdf