

Perceptions on obesity management among people with obesity and healthcare professionals in the Asia-Pacific region



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<https://sciencehub.novonordisk.com/ico2022/Nam.html>

Background and Aim

- Obesity is a significant health problem globally and more so in the Asia-Pacific region.¹
- In addition to being a chronic disease, obesity is an established risk factor for numerous health problems, including hypertension, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, stroke, respiratory diseases, musculoskeletal conditions, and some forms of cancer; it also increases the risk of mortality.²⁻⁴ Hence, prevention and management of obesity needs to be a priority in this region.
- The aim of this study was to explore perceptions and attitudes towards obesity and its management among 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.*

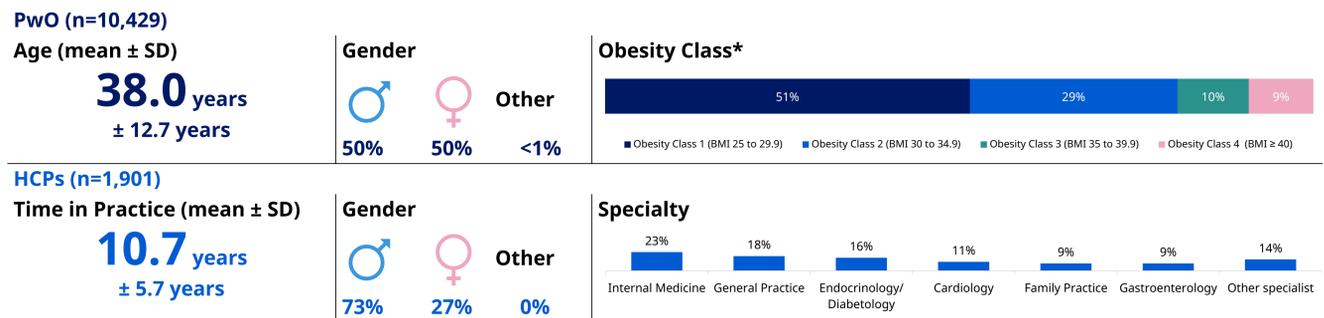
*A Division of Display, Inc., New South Wales, Australia

Results

- The characteristics of the study sample are described in **Figure 1**.
- Most PwO and HCPs believed obesity has an extreme impact on a person's overall health (**Figure 2**), similar to diabetes (74% and 80%, respectively) and stroke (72% and 81%).
- PwO and HCPs had different perspectives regarding the healthcare system and approaches to obesity management. Most HCPs believed the healthcare system was a good resource for weight loss, but fewer PwO had a similar perception (**Figure 3**).
 - PwO were also less likely than HCPs to agree that the treatment of obesity should be a team effort involving different HCPs and that the cost of obesity therapy was a barrier to weight loss (**Figure 3**).
- Many PwO and HCPs agreed there were good prescription weight loss medications currently available, but they were concerned about the side effects and long-term safety of these medications (**Figure 4**).
- The majority of PwO would rather lose weight on their own than depend on medications (**Figure 4**) or have weight loss surgery (**Figure 5**).
 - Likewise, a substantial proportion of HCPs believed their patients would rather lose weight on their own than take prescription weight loss medications. Additionally, most HCPs preferred to recommend lifestyle changes than weight loss surgery to their patients with obesity (**Figure 5**).
- Only about half of PwO and HCPs believed prescription weight loss medications and weight loss surgery were more effective than other treatment options (**Figure 4 and Figure 5**).

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. Perception of Obesity on a Person's Health

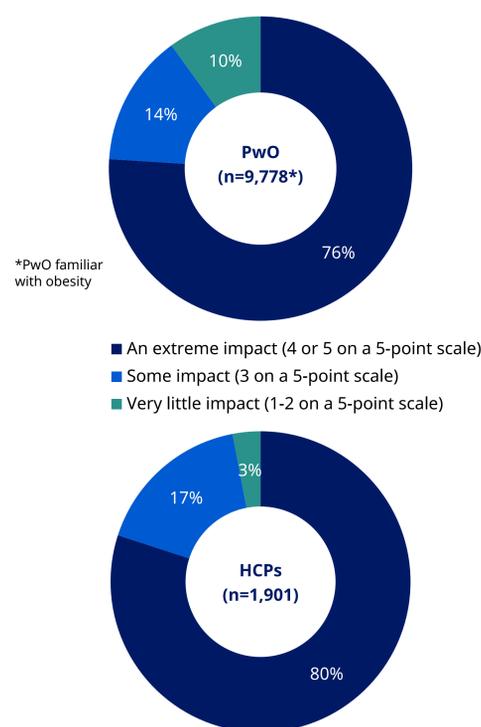
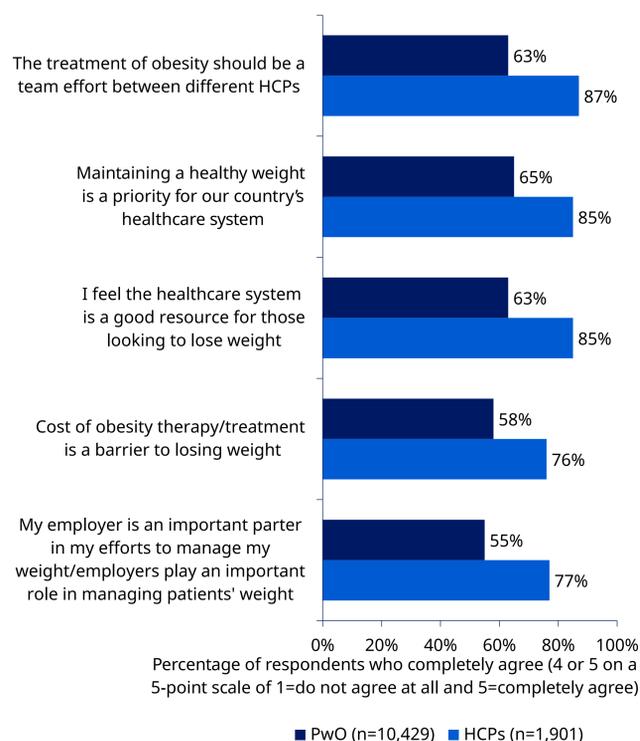


Figure 3. Obesity Attitudes and Healthcare System



Note: some statement shortened for brevity

Figure 4. Attitudes Towards Prescription Weight Loss Medications

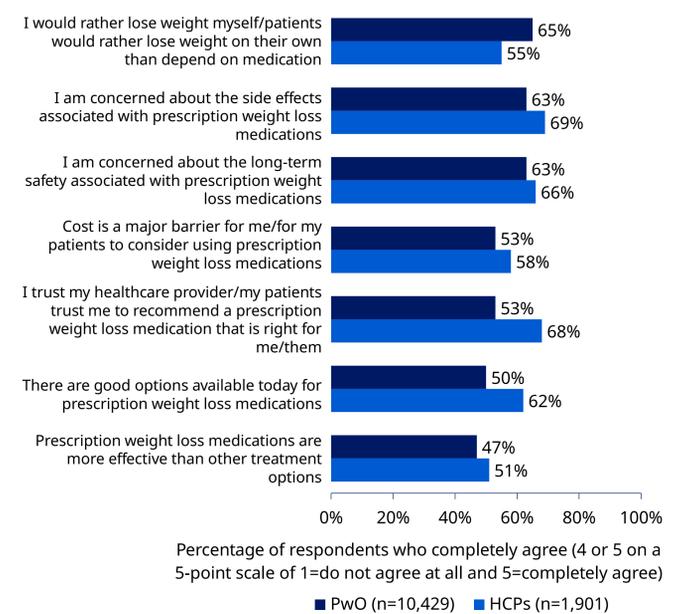
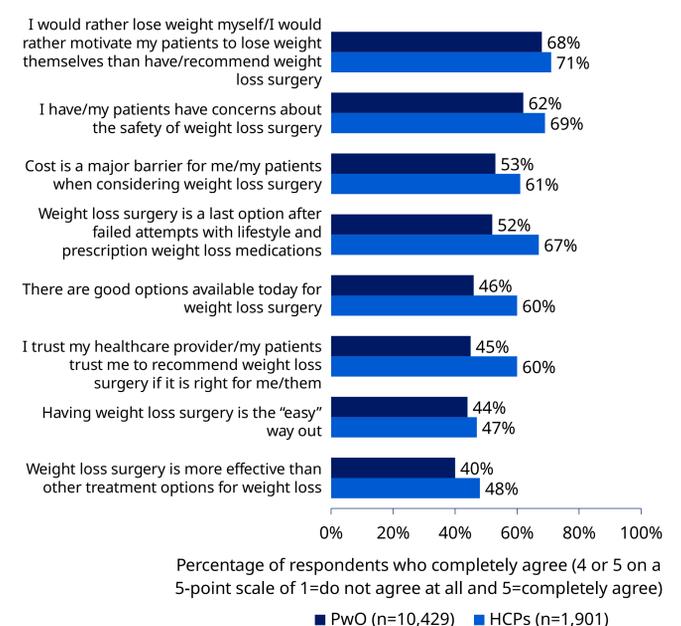


Figure 5. Attitudes Towards Weight Loss Surgery



Summary and Conclusions

- In the Asia-Pacific region, HCPs held a more positive perception of the healthcare system and multidisciplinary team approach regarding obesity management than did PwO.
- Although both PwO and HCPs agreed that obesity had an extreme impact on health, they preferred lifestyle intervention to other treatment modalities such as prescription weight loss medications and bariatric surgery, citing concerns about safety and side-effects.
- PwO and HCPs may benefit from heightened awareness and broader education on obesity management and treatment options.

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