In 2019, Obesity Canada conducted the first rigorous appraisal of access to obesity treatment across Canada, including bariatric surgery and other medical treatments. This report examines outpatient treatment for obesity in Canada, looking at some of the same analyses two years later, very little has changed.

We looked at access to four key obesity management tools recommended in Canadian guidelines:

1. Medically supervised weight-management programs with meal replacements
2. Medically supervised weight-management programs with weight-management medications
3. Anti-obesity medications
4. Bariatric surgery

**Results**

- **Medically supervised weight-management programs with meal replacements**
  - **86,000+** of obese Canadians are supported by an interdisciplinary team for obesity management.
  - **80%** of provinces and territories have a program, and **77%** have a program for adults.

- **Medically supervised weight-management programs with weight-management medications**
  - **100%** of provinces and territories have access to anti-obesity medications, and **100%** have access to diabetes medications.
  - **98%** of provinces and territories have a program for adults.

- **Anti-obesity medications**
  - **99%** of adults eligible for weight-loss medications have access to them.
  - **97%** of adults eligible for medication for type 2 diabetes have access to it.

- **Bariatric surgery**
  - **20%** of provinces and territories have a program, and **17%** have a program for adults.

**Summary**

The summary page contains a table showing results for each province and territory, including:

- **Medically supervised weight-management programs with meal replacements**
- **Medically supervised weight-management programs with weight-management medications**
- **Anti-obesity medications**
- **Bariatric surgery**

The table provides details on the number of adults eligible for each treatment and the percentage of those eligible who have access to it.

**Access to Behavioural Interventions and Interdisciplinary Teams for Obesity Management**

- Dietitians are most commonly available to Canadians with obesity.
- Access to exercise professionals (e.g., exercise physiologists and kinesiologists) and to mental health supports and cognitive behavioral therapy is low, with the primary reason being a lack of resources.

**Access to Medically Supervised Weight-Management Programs with Meal Replacements**

- Costs associated with meal replacement products and programs provided within a chronic disease framework.
- Coverage for meal replacement products is an out-of-pocket expense.
- Costs associated with medical supervision (diagnostic tests and clinicians) are covered by health authorities.

**Access to Prescription Anti-obesity Medications**

- Coverage for anti-obesity medications is provided for type 2 diabetes or hypertension.
- Coverage is disproportionately greater for medications for other chronic conditions like cardiovascular disease.

**Access to Bariatric Surgery**

- **20%** of provinces and territories have a program, and **17%** have a program for adults.
- **2%** of eligible adults in Canada are expected to receive surgery.

**Zero Access to Bariatric Surgery through Private Drug Plans**

- Only **20%** of provinces and territories have a program that treat obesity within a chronic disease framework.
- The federal government also recommends access to medications for obesity.

- Obesity continues to be viewed as a self-inflicted risk factor, which limits the interventions provided to patients.

**Revision**

Since 2017, Obesity Canada has certified 50 Certified Bariatric Educators (CBEs) in Canada, up from 18 in 2017.

- The number of active nursing professionals has grown from 67 in 2017 to 86,000+ in 2019.

- **Access to private drug plans is very restricted for other chronic conditions like type 2 diabetes or hypertension.**

**Private Coverage**

- **20%** of eligible adults have private drug plans.
- **40%** of eligible adults have no private drug plans.
- **89%** of eligible adults have no private drug plans.

**ACCESS TO MEDICALLY SUPERVISED WEIGHT-MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS WITH MEAL REPLACEMENTS**

- **$250.00+** of obese Canadians are supported by an interdisciplinary team for obesity management.

**ACCESS TO PRESCRIPTION ANTI-OBESEITY MEDICATIONS**

- **20%** of obese Canadians have access to prescription anti-obesity medications.

**ACCESS TO BARIATRIC SURGERY**

- **20%** of eligible adults in Canada are expected to receive surgery.

**REPORT CARD ON ACCESS TO OBESITY TREATMENT FOR ADULTS IN CANADA 2019**

- Obesity continues to represent a major public health challenge.
- The number of obese Canadians per year is **1,073 adults** in Nova Scotia.
- The number of provinces and territories that treat obesity as a chronic condition includes **6**.
- The number of practicing nurses in Canada is **400,000+**.
- The number of practicing dietitians in Canada is **86,000+**.

**SUMMARY**

- **1,073 adults** in Nova Scotia.
- **96 adults** in Saskatchewan.
- **1,424 adults** in Quebec.
- **1,824 adults** in Yukon.
- **1,886 adults** in British Columbia.

**View the full report at obesitycanada.ca/report-card**

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