

What is the Obesity Management Service?

The Obesity Management Service supports adults with a high level of obesity to improve their health and wellbeing. The Service focuses on those who are at high risk of developing complications from their obesity or those who already have limiting health problems. The Service team includes doctors, nurses, dietitians, psychologists and exercise physiologists. Weight loss surgery will also be considered for adults with a Body Mass Index (BMI) over 40kg/m².

What will the Obesity Management Service do for me?

The Obesity Management Service will work with you to achieve a healthier lifestyle and reduce your risk of developing further medical conditions. Following a detailed assessment, you will work with your case manager to develop an Obesity Management Plan which may include:

- Advice on physical activity and nutrition
- Group education
- Physical activity programs
- Strategies to improve social and emotional wellbeing
- Support for long term self-management
- Care coordination for those patients with a number of complex medical conditions

In general, the Service will provide 12 months support. The service will not take over primary care from your general practitioner, nor provide specialist care for conditions other than obesity.

What about Weight Loss Surgery?

As result of ACT Government funding, public weight loss surgery has become available in the ACT for a small number of suitable patients. Like many weight loss strategies, this surgery should be done in conjunction with positive lifestyle changes, including healthy eating and regular exercise. It is not appropriate for all patients.

The Service has a clinical advisory committee that is using the following factors to consider which patients to offer weight loss surgery. Note these criteria are only a guide, and all patients are assessed on an individual basis. The factors are based on the best available evidence to ensure the maximum value to the community from the limited number of operations available at this time:

Obesity Management Service Information for Patients



- BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²
- Aged 18 – 60 years
- Active involvement in an individualised Obesity Management Plan developed by the Obesity Management Service for at least 6 months or longer.
- Some weight loss, or weight stabilisation
- Inability to lose sufficient weight for their BMI to be under 40
- Presence of obesity related conditions that may be improved by weight loss surgery (e.g. metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, hypoventilation, polycystic ovarian syndrome, weight bearing joint disease)

Factors against being referred for weight loss surgery include:

- Prior weight loss surgery
- An existing medical condition that could increase risk to health if weight loss surgery was conducted (e.g. Gastro-oesophageal Reflux Disease, some other gastrointestinal diseases, current cancer, cardiac or pulmonary disease, serious blood disorder)
- People on necessary medical treatments that decrease the effectiveness of weight loss surgery
- Inability to maintain lifestyle changes required for weight loss surgery to be successful

If a patient is considered suitable for weight loss surgery, the following will occur:

- Patients will be asked to meet with one of our doctors to discuss the option of surgery. This discussion would involve an explanation of the surgery, risks and benefits and potential wait time
- If agreed to by the patient, the doctor will refer the patient to a weight loss surgeon.
- The surgeon and the patient together will make the final decision on whether to go ahead with the surgery.
- The surgeon will arrange specific clinical care for three months before and three months after the surgery
- Three months after surgery the patient will be reviewed by the Obesity Management Service for a new Obesity Management Plan if required, or Discharge from the Service.

Regardless of whether public-funded weight loss surgery is or is not recommended for you, establishing healthy eating and lifestyle is the overall goal for all patients.

Obesity Management Service Information for Patients



How can I be referred to the service?

The Obesity Management Service accepts patients who have been referred by their doctor. Your doctor may refer you if:

- You are over 18 years of age
- You have a Body Mass Index (a measure of obesity) of 40kg /m² or over
- You have one or more other medical conditions

Where is the service based?

The OMS is based at the new Belconnen Community Health Centre, 56 Lathlain St (on the corner of Lathlain and Wales Street), Belconnen, 2617. There is free 3 hour and disabled parking underneath the health centre, enter off Wales St. It is Taxi Spot 54. If you require assistance with transport, please discuss with the Obesity Management Service case manager.

Contact details

Obesity Management Service phone: (02) 5124 1552.



Acknowledgement of Country



Canberra Health Services acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. Canberra Health Services respects their continuing culture and connections to the land and the unique contributions they make to the life of this area. Canberra Health Services also acknowledges and welcomes Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples who are part of the community we serve.



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