

A Call to Action: Setting the Research Agenda for Addressing Obesity and Weight-Related Topics in Children with Physical Disabilities

McPherson et al. (2016)
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For which topic were research priorities identified?

obesity and weight in children with physical disabilities

In which location was the research priority setting conducted?

North America - Canada

Why was it conducted at all?

Pediatric obesity is a world-wide challenge. Children with physical disabilities are particularly at risk of obesity, which is worrisome because obesity can result in serious secondary conditions that decrease health status, reduce independence, and increase impact on healthcare systems. However, the determinants of obesity and the health promotion needs of children with physical disabilities are relatively unexplored compared with their typically developing peers.

What was the objective?

to identify clinically relevant research priorities, by leveraging the collective expertise of researchers, clinicians, and families, to identify potential obstacles to research initiatives and opportunities to overcome them, and to initiate a sustainable, collaborative national research network with links to international leaders

What was the outcome?

a list of 3 research areas

How long did the research prioritization take?

2 days

Which methods were used to identify research priorities?

workshop

How were the priorities for research identified exactly?

Step 1: workshop with nominal group technique: two lived experience presentations by parents of children with a disability, followed by scientific presentations, followed by visioning exercise: participants were asked: What do we need to know more about over the next 2-5 years to help us better address obesity in children with physical disabilities?, 71 knowledge gaps identified, using modified nominal group technique participants wrote knowledge gaps on cards and then discussed them, ideas were then grouped into six themes, obstacles and opportunities for accomplishing the research within each of the six themes were then identified and discussed, participants then asked to select three of the six original themes that they felt were the most appropriate and feasible for initiating the research efforts

Which stakeholders took part?

Researchers, trainees, front-line clinicians, parents, former clients with disabilities, community partners, decision makers. 38 participants: researchers (n=12), trainees (n=4), front-line clinicians (n=12), parents (n=3), former clients with disabilities (n=1), community partners (n=3), decision makers (n=3).

How were stakeholders recruited?

Participants were identified (1) through the existing literature on disability and obesity (researchers and trainees), (2) by operations managers working in relevant clinical programs (clinicians), (3) from members of the Family Engagement Committee at the host pediatric rehabilitation hospital (parents/former clients), (4) staff members from local agencies, such as accessible fitness facilities (community partners), and (5) representatives from provincial health systems (decision makers).

Were stakeholders actively involved or did they just participate?

Stakeholders were mere participants of the research prioritization process; they were not actively involved in the process.