

PRESS RELEASE

European Obesity Day highlights a growing epidemic

Obesity requires urgent action say experts

Brussels, May 11, 2018: Europe's leading organisation responsible for research into obesity, is warning that more has to be done to tackle the region's rising obesity epidemic which is having a devastating effect on healthcare costs and productivity.

The European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO) says that the rate of obesity, particularly among children, continues to rise at an alarming rate.

Estimates from several years ago put the healthcare and lost productivity costs of obesity in Europe at more than €70 billion per year¹. EASO says that this has almost certainly increased significantly, in line with the growing incidence of overweight and obesity across the region.

According to the World Health Organization, obesity is one of the greatest public health challenges of the 21st century and latest estimates in European Union countries indicate that overweight affects 30-70% and obesity affects 10-30% of adults².

For European Obesity Day 2018, EASO and its member associations in 32 countries in Europe, will be staging various events to create greater awareness and understanding of the disease and to highlight the effects that obesity can have on many other diseases, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and some cancers.

Open days and public awareness campaigns to draw attention to the treatment options available are being staged by healthcare providers and patient organisations, as well as by many hospitals and specialist clinics.

In Brussels EASO is organising a major policy conference³ on Thursday (May 17) to discuss the need for education, treatment and care. EASO, is calling for better obesity training for healthcare professionals and for General Practitioners (GPs) in particular.

¹ <https://www.europeanobesityday.eu/tackling-obesity-together/policymakers/>

² <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/noncommunicable-diseases/obesity/data-and-statistics>

³ <https://www.europeanobesityday.eu/easo-annual-policy-conference/policy-conference-2018/>

“Despite the growing epidemic and the burden it places on healthcare systems, GP’s are given very little training on obesity,” says EASO President, Professor Hermann Toplak.

“This is a major barrier to obesity treatment. More effort needs to be made to improve healthcare professionals’ understanding of obesity and comprehensive treatment approaches that can be delivered as part of patient care,” he said.

The need for better training for GPs is confirmed by the findings of a survey of more than 700 European GPs which EASO will publish on Thursday (May 17).

European Obesity Day activities can also be followed on Twitter (@EOD2018 and #EOD2018) and on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/EObesityD/> .

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For further information:

European Obesity Day website: www.europeanobesityday.eu

European Policy Conference: The need for Education, Treatment and Care: <https://www.europeanobesityday.eu/easo-annual-policy-conference/policy-conference-2018/>

The European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO) www.easo.org

The World Health Organisation www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/noncommunicable-diseases/obesity.

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