

Perceptions, attitudes, behaviours and barriers to effective obesity care: key dietitian findings from the ACTION Switzerland survey study

Gabriela Fontana¹; Philipp A. Gerber²; Dominique Durrer³; Ralph Peterli⁴; Doris Fischer-Taeschler¹; Gionata Cavadini⁵; Patrick Pasi²

¹Swiss Obesity Alliance, Baden, Switzerland; ²University Hospital Zürich and University of Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland; ³Eurobesitas EASO COMs Centre, Vevey, Switzerland; ⁴Clarunis, University Centre for Gastrointestinal and Liver Diseases, St. Clara Hospital and University Hospital Basel, Basel, Switzerland; ⁵Novo Nordisk Pharma AG, Zürich, Switzerland.

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Presenter disclosure

Gabriela Fontana is a dietitian, a member of the ACTION Switzerland Steering Committee, and the secretary for the Swiss Obesity Alliance

- The Swiss Obesity Alliance received consultancy fees from Novo Nordisk for the role of its board members and secretary as members of the ACTION Switzerland Steering Committee during the conduct of the study

Introduction

- **Obesity** is a chronic disease that **requires long-term support** from HCPs¹
- There are **limited data** on the experiences of **dietitians who provide obesity care** in **Switzerland**



The **ACTION Switzerland** study aimed to assess **perceptions, attitudes, behaviours** and **barriers to effective obesity care** among **PwO, physicians** and **dietitians** in Switzerland

This presentation reports **key findings** relating to **dietitians**

Key results for PwO and physicians were previously presented at the SGED-SSED Annual Meeting in 2022

*ACTION, Awareness, Care and Treatment In Obesity maNagement; HCP, healthcare professional; PwO, people with obesity; SGED-SSED, Swiss Society of Endocrinology and Diabetology.
1. Bray GA, et al. Obes Rev 2017;18(7):715-723.*

Methods

Study design

- ACTION Switzerland (NCT05232786) was a **cross-sectional**, quantitative, **survey-based study**
- Participants were recruited via online panels in **Switzerland** in March/April 2022 and completed surveys in English, French, German or Italian
- The surveys used were specifically developed for ACTION Switzerland
 - They were based on the surveys from **ACTION-IO**,¹ but **modified** with input from the ACTION Switzerland steering committee
 - The PwO and HCP surveys covered **similar themes**



Variables included:

- Sociodemographics
- Health/wellbeing of PwO
- Impact of obesity
- Attitudes about obesity and food
- Weight loss conversations
- Interactions with HCPs
- Sources of information

*ACTION, Awareness, Care and Treatment In Obesity maNagement; HCP, healthcare professional; IO, International Observation; PwO, people with obesity.
1. Caterson ID, et al. Diabetes Obes Metab 2019;21:1914–1924.*

Methods

Key eligibility criteria



PwO inclusion criteria

Adults aged ≥ 18 years

BMI ≥ 30 kg/m², based on self-reported height and weight



HCP inclusion criteria

Physicians or dietitians who spent $\geq 50\%$ of their time in direct patient care and had been in clinical practice for ≥ 2 years

Dietitians were members of the Swiss Association of Dietitians whose services were covered by compulsory health insurance; they had seen ≥ 5 PwO in the past month

Results

Number of respondents with completed surveys



PwO
(N=1,002)



Physicians
(N=125)



Dietitians
(N=25)

Results

Characteristics of dietitians surveyed

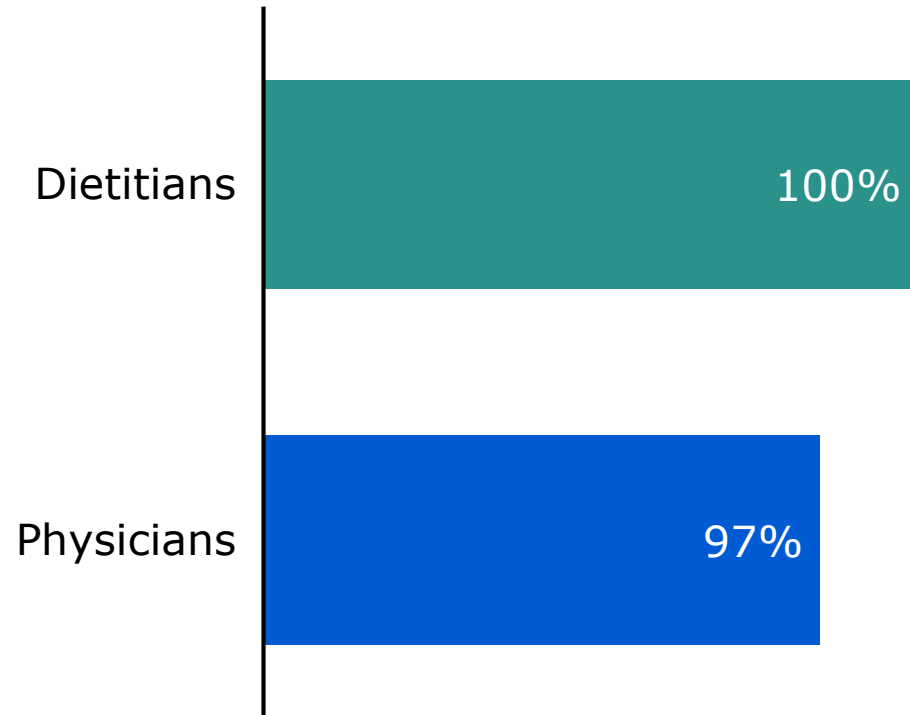
	Dietitians (N=25)
Age, mean years	40.4
Gender, %	
Male	8
Female	92
Language region: German,* %	100
Time in practice, mean years	15.6
Proportion of professional time spent in patient care management, mean %	73
Practice type, %	
Individual medical practice	24
Hospital (public/private)	72
Group practice (privately owned)	4

**Dietitians of every language region were invited to participate in the study; however, all responses were from German-speaking regions.*

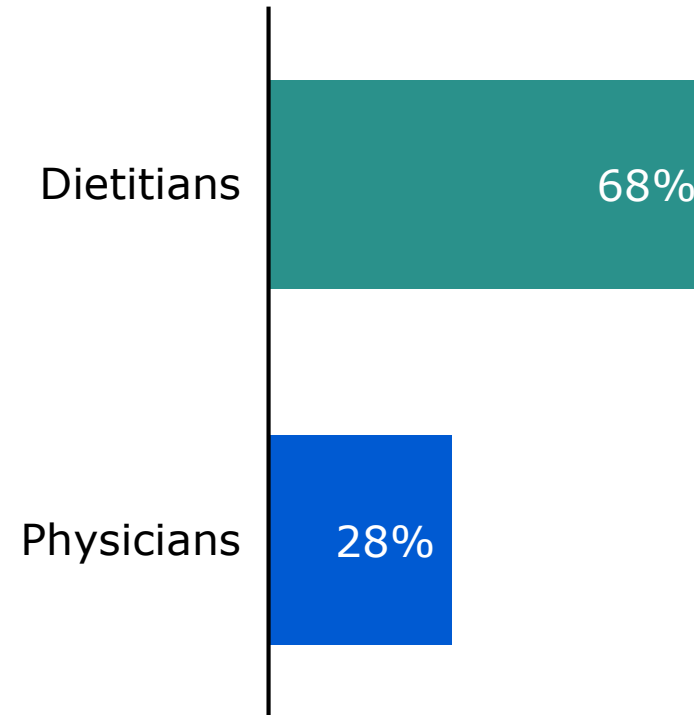
Results

HCP attitudes regarding obesity/weight management

A) Obesity is a chronic disease



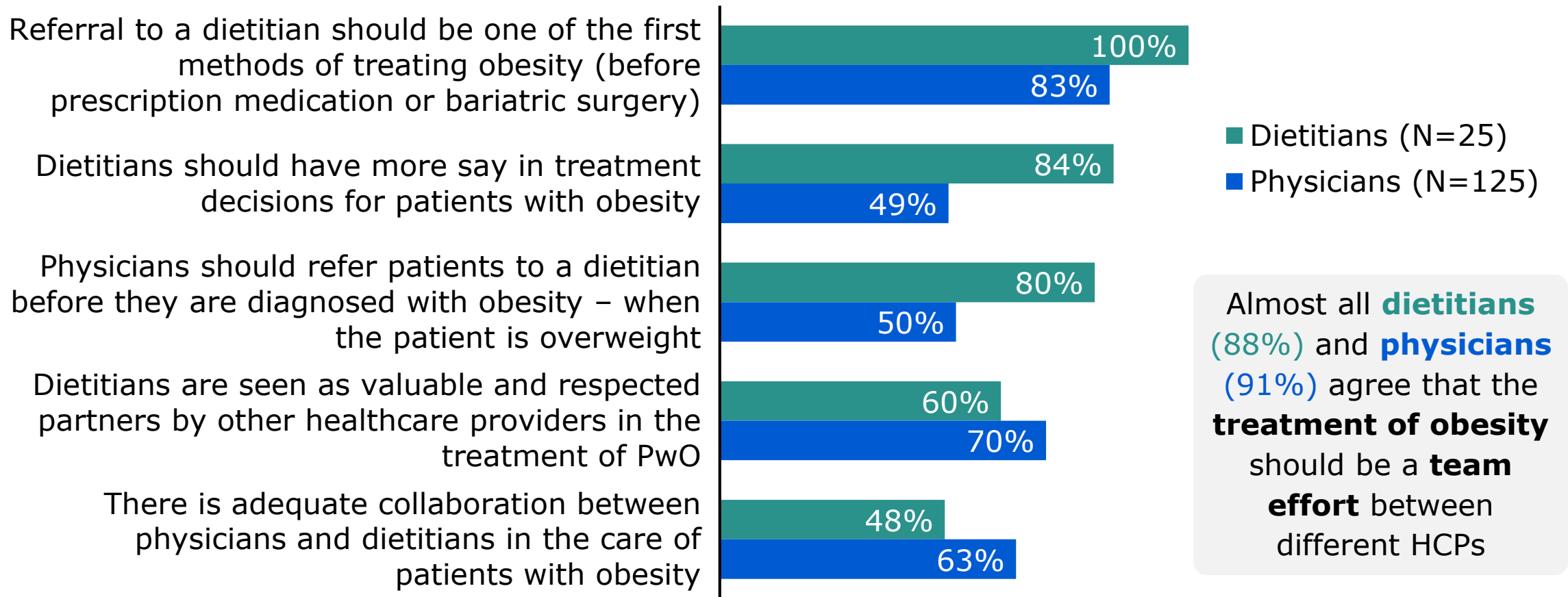
B) My patients' weight loss is completely their responsibility



Proportion of dietitians (N=25) and physicians (N=125) who completely agreed with each statement (i.e. selected one of the top two response options from a five-point Likert scale). HCP, healthcare professional.

Results

HCP attitudes regarding dietitians

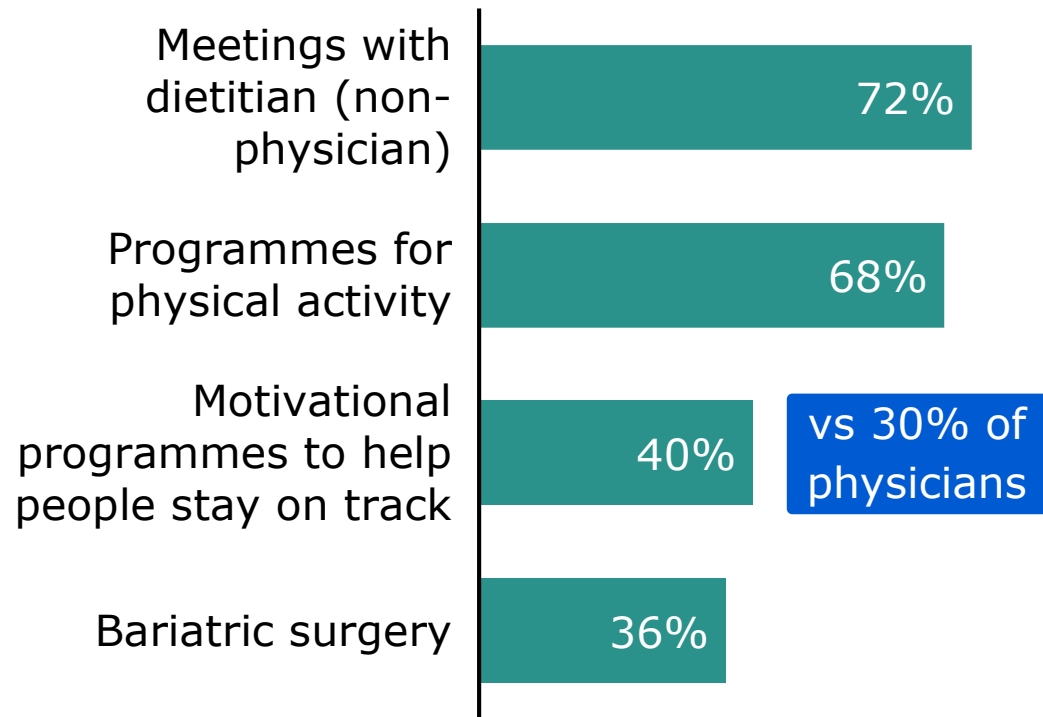


Proportion of dietitians (N=25) and physicians (N=125) who completely agreed with each statement (i.e. selected one of the top two response options from a five-point Likert scale).
HCP, healthcare professional; PwO, people with obesity.

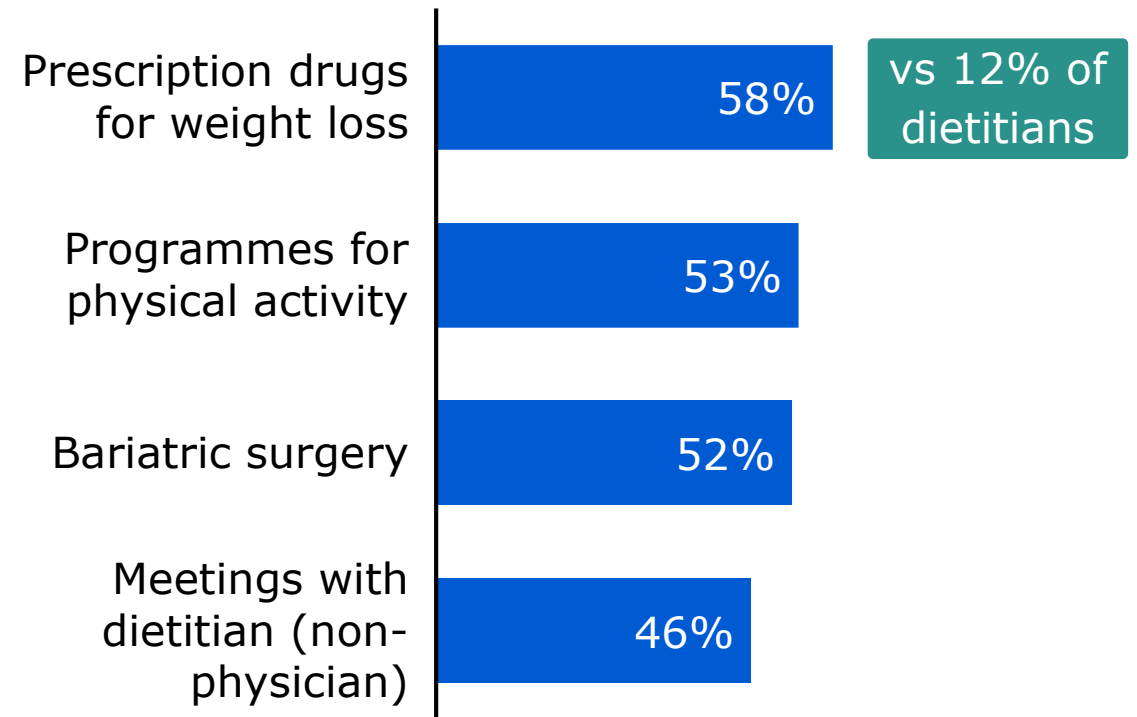
Results

Most helpful types of weight management support: HCP perceptions

A) Dietitian responses



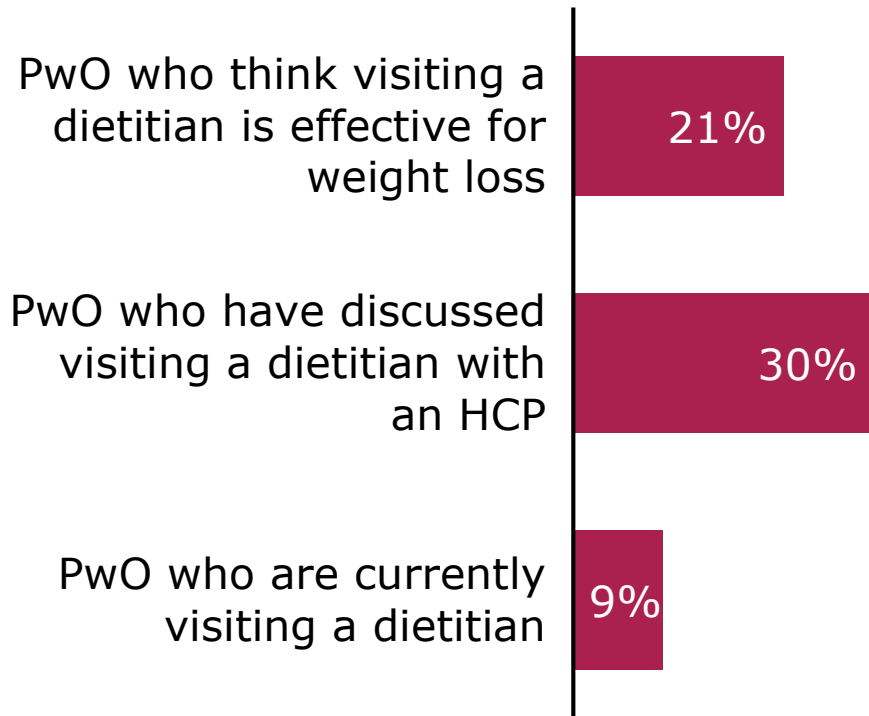
B) Physician responses



Proportion of dietitians (N=25) and physicians (N=125) who selected each prespecified response option. Only the top four responses for each group are shown. HCP, healthcare professional.

Results

Visiting a dietitian: PwO perceptions, discussions and experiences

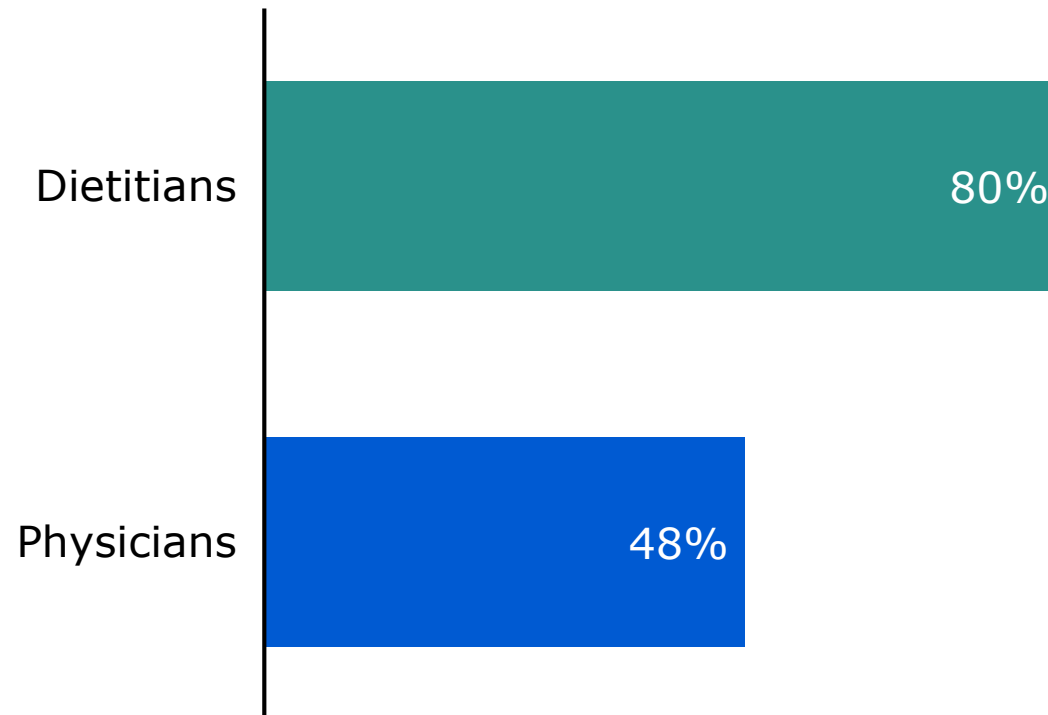


*Data are for PwO who had made a weight loss attempt (n=894).
HCP, healthcare professional; PwO, people with obesity.*

Fontana G, et al. Presented at the NutriDays Congress, 24–25 March 2023, Lausanne, Switzerland.

Results

Proportion of HCPs who believe that behaviour therapy/psychotherapy is one of the most effective long-term weight management methods

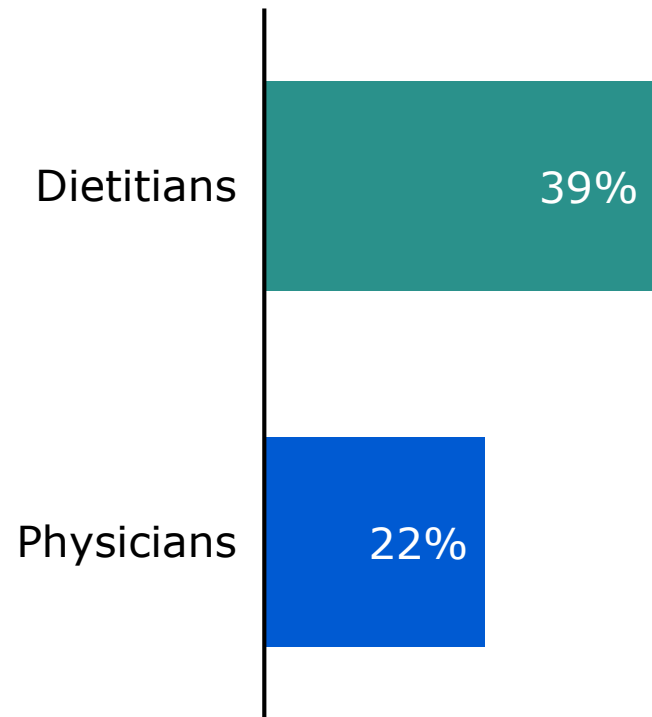


For both **dietitians** and **physicians**, the **top two** most effective long-term weight management methods were:

- Improving eating habits (92% and 78%)
- Being more active (92% and 72%)

Results

Mean proportion of HCPs' patients with obesity for whom they recommend behaviour therapy/psychotherapy for weight management



Meal/nutrient tracking is also more frequently recommended by **dietitians** (55% of PwO) vs **physicians** (32% of PwO)

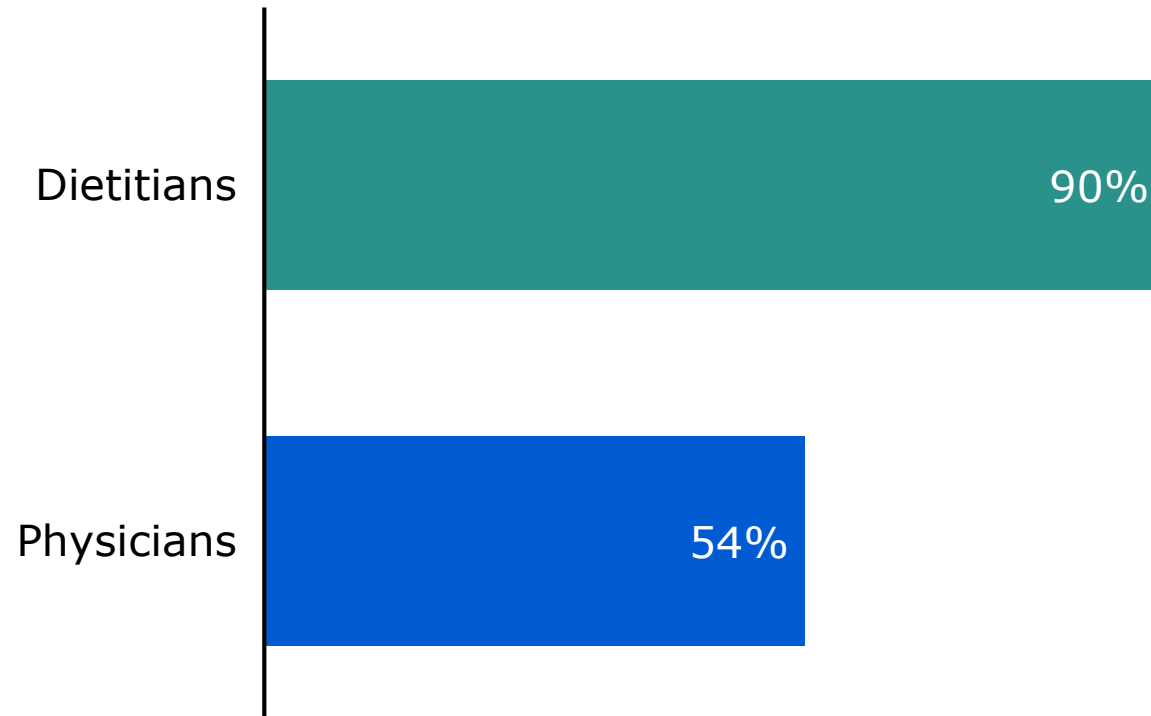
Physicians recommend **visiting a dietitian** to 59% of their patients with obesity

Data reflect responses from all dietitians (N=25) and physicians (N=125).
HCP, healthcare professional; PwO, people with obesity.

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Results

Mean proportion of HCPs' patients with obesity with whom they schedule a follow-up appointment to discuss weight



*Data reflect responses from all dietitians (N=25) and physicians (N=125).
HCP, healthcare professional.*

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Conclusions



Dietitians in Switzerland are **eager to be involved early** in the obesity treatment process



Compared with physicians, dietitians **place greater value on visiting a dietitian** as a form of weight management support



Dietitians **more often recommend behaviour therapy** and **schedule follow-up appointments** to discuss weight with PwO than physicians



As such, to **improve interdisciplinary collaboration**, there is a need to highlight to physicians that **dietitians and behavioural therapists are a valuable resource** for weight management