

Improving the assessment and management of obesity in UK children and adolescents: the PROMISE research programme including a RCT

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Plain English summary

The PROMISE research programme including a RCT

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Plain English summary

The childhood obesity epidemic is one of the foremost health priorities in the UK. However, there are several gaps in the childhood obesity pathway outlined by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. The Paediatric Research in Obesity Multi-modal Intervention and Service Evaluation (PROMISE) five-study programme was created to address these gaps.

Most parents do not recognise that their overweight/obese children are overweight, and most do not consider being overweight to be a health risk. The National Child Measurement Programme feedback was found to be helpful and had positive effects on parental knowledge and perceptions of being overweight, but had little impact on behaviours.

A small sample of general practitioners reported that using the online obesity risk prediction tool in consultations was acceptable and had potential to enhance the impact of advice. Families also found such consultations acceptable, although both doctors and families reported a need for subsequent practical support for weight management.

The multicomponent community lifestyle intervention was not more effective than enhanced standard care in reducing the body mass index (or improving any of the secondary outcomes) of obese adolescents.

There was a steady increase in anti-obesity drug and metformin (Glucophage®; Merck Serono, Darmstadt, Germany) prescribing for obese/overweight young people, but most young people rapidly stopped taking anti-obesity drugs/metformin after prescription, and several side effects were highlighted.

Deciding about weight loss surgery (bariatric surgery) for young people is a tough challenge for health-care professionals. Young people decide to undergo bariatric surgery because they 'want a different future', but the process is full of dilemmas and surgery is often chosen as 'the last resort'. Bariatric surgery in adolescence appears to be highly cost-effective.

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