

New research shows practitioners struggle to effectively manage child obesity

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New research, led by Dr Katrina Turner from the University of Bristol Department of Community Based Medicine, has assessed primary care practitioners' views and experiences of treating childhood obesity.

The prevalence of [childhood obesity](#) is increasing worldwide, posing a long-term threat to future health. In 2006 the Department of Health and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) published guidance on the management of childhood obesity for use by [primary care](#) practitioners. Little is known, however, about practitioners' views and experiences of managing childhood obesity in primary care.

Research, led by Dr Katrina Turner from the University's Department of Community Based Medicine, assessed primary care practitioners' views

and experiences of treating childhood obesity. It concluded that practitioners do not currently view primary care as an effective treatment setting for childhood obesity and it is unlikely that the guidance from the Department of Health and NICE will have a meaningful impact on their management of this condition.

In a series of in-depth interviews with GPs, practice nurses, school nurses and health visitors, practitioners detailed how they felt various factors limited the extent to which they could intervene effectively. These factors included a lack of practitioner expertise, NHS resources and contact with primary school children, the causes of childhood obesity and the need to work with parents who were often unwilling or unable to address their child's weight. It was also apparent that very few participants had knowledge of the 2006 guidance.

More information: Findings from the study were published in the [British Journal of General Practice](#).

Provided by University of Bristol ([news](#) : [web](#))

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