

# JCHS

Journal of Clinical and Health Sciences

#2  
2026

**SUPPLEMENTARY ISSUE**

Malaysian Obesity Society  
**MYOS**



## <sup>ND</sup> **2 NATIONAL OBESITY SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE**

### **ABSTRACT BOOK**

**11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> April 2026**  
**Connexion Conference &  
Event Centre,**  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

*Theme*  
**Obesity as a Treatable  
Chronic Disease:  
Science, Strategy,  
and Success**

Issue September 2026 | Volume 11 Issue 02 (Supplementary)  
eISSN 0127-984x  
[jchs-medicine.uitm.edu.my](http://jchs-medicine.uitm.edu.my)



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### Improving Employee Health Through Workplace Intervention: The “Watch Our Weight” (WOW) Program – A Case Study

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#### Introduction:

Employee obesity negatively affects productivity, absenteeism, and healthcare costs. In response to increasing obesity rates and unhealthy lifestyle behaviours among staff, Pantai Hospital Kuala Lumpur (PHKL) implemented the *Watch Our Weight (WOW)* Program, a structured workplace-based weight management initiative aimed at improving employee health and promoting sustainable lifestyle changes.

#### Methods:

The WOW Program was implemented in multiple phases between 2015 and 2023, with multidisciplinary approach involving dietitians, medical officers, human resource personnel, and allied health professionals. Phase 1 focused on organization-wide health promotion through education, environmental modifications, and voluntary participation. Phase 2 consisted of a three-month intensive, individualized weight management intervention for employees with obesity (BMI  $\geq 30$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>), including calorie-restricted diets, structured physical activity prescriptions, cognitive behavioural therapy, one-on-one dietetic consultations, group exercise, and digital self-monitoring tools. Phase 3 expanded enrolment and compared different dietary strategies, conventional calorie restriction, intermittent fasting, and meal replacement while maintaining standardized physical activity and behavioural support, largely delivered through virtual platforms due to pandemic-related restrictions. Phase 4 targeted specific departments using a peer-supported model, emphasizing meal replacement combined with structured nutrition education, behavioural change strategies, and regular monitoring. Across all phases, participants underwent periodic anthropometric, biochemical, physical activity, and behavioural assessments.

#### Results:

Phase 1 achieved modest outcomes, with 50.9% of participants reducing weight. Substantially, greater improvements were observed in intensive phases. In phase 2, 90% of participants achieved  $\geq 5\%$  weight loss with significant reductions in weight, BMI, body fat, waist circumference, and improvements in lipid profiles and glycaemic markers. In phase 3, over 94% achieved  $\geq 5\%$  weight loss across all dietary approaches, with meal replacement producing superior outcomes. Phase 4, department-based interventions achieved 50% target attainment and improved eating self-efficacy.

#### Conclusion:

The WOW Program effectively improved employee weight and metabolic health through phased, multidisciplinary workplace interventions. Limitations include small sample sizes, lack of control groups, and short-term follow-up. Nevertheless, the program demonstrates the feasibility and impact of structured workplace-based weight management strategies.