

WASHINGTON STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION

RESOLUTION #1

BODY MASS INDEX (BMI) SCREENING, EVALUATION AND TREATMENT

- WHEREAS, Obesity is a chronic disease of epidemic levels: 64 percent of adults in the United States, approximately 97 million, are overweight or obese and in children the rates of overweight has doubled and tripled in adolescents over the last 20 years, and
- WHEREAS, The annual cost of obesity is now approximately \$117 billion yearly in direct and indirect costs, crippling our nation's ability to provide affordable health care coverage, and
- WHEREAS, Overweight and obesity is recognized as the leading health indicator for serious health problems such as diabetes type 2, cardiovascular heart disease, stroke, hypertension, certain cancers (breast, uterine, colon and prostate), and
- WHEREAS, The obesity epidemic has now developed into a twin epidemic of diabetes type 2 with 17 million diagnosed diabetics and an estimated 16 million pre-diabetics according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and
- WHEREAS, The U.S. Preventive Task Force (USPSTF) recommendation for clinicians to screen all adult patients for obesity using the Body Mass Index (BMI) and offer intensive counseling and behavioral interventions to promote sustained weight loss is at website <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/3rduspstf/obesity/obesrr.htm>, and
- WHEREAS, BMI is a fundamental clinical risk indicator of health in adults because it identifies individuals who are at risk of weight related diseases or premature death due to their overweight, obesity or underweight status, and
- WHEREAS, BMI ranges are based on the effect body weight has on disease and death: Underweight (BMI < 18.5) Overweight (BMI 25 - 29.9), Obesity (BMI 30 greater), and
- WHEREAS, *Evidence-Based Clinical Guidelines on Identification, Evaluation and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults*, developed by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI), in cooperation with the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) of the National Institutes of Health, are available along with educational materials for health professionals, patients and the public at website http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/obesity/ob_home, and
- WHEREAS, Evidence-based guidelines and training modules on using *BMI-for-Age Growth Charts for Children Ages 2-20*, developed by CDC, are available at website <http://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/>, and
- WHEREAS, Present health care practice record heights and weights on charts but fail to evaluate the BMI, and therefore miss the opportunity to identify those who are underweight, overweight or obese and need medical intervention to motivate improvement in dietary and physical activity lifestyle habits which prevent and reduce overweight and obesity, and
- WHEREAS, The *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity* at http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/1_1.htm recommends adopting BMI as a common measure of overweight and obesity, and
- WHEREAS, The American Medical Association (AMA) adopted a policy on obesity and developed *Roadmaps for Clinical Practice: Assessment and Management of Adult Obesity*, which are based on the NIH obesity guidelines and is available at <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/10931.html>, and
- WHEREAS, The Washington State Medical Association (WSMA) ratified a resolution in 2003 that recognizes obesity as a major endemic health problem by adopting and promoting existing AMA policy on obesity, and

- WHEREAS, The Spokane BMI Initiative is a grassroots coalition that is demonstrating how a community can institutionalize routine BMI screening, evaluation and treatment by incorporating the National Institutes of Health's clinical guidelines and the CDC's BMI-for-Age guidelines into health care practice and worksite wellness programs without a major funding stream, and
- WHEREAS, The Spokane County Medical Society adopted BMI as a health risk indicator and developed and adopted *Guidelines on Assessment and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults and Children* utilizing NIH Obesity Guidelines and CDC's BMI-for-Age Growth Charts, and
- WHEREAS, The Spokane County Health District in collaboration with the Spokane BMI Initiative developed a health risk awareness survey which is available at website www.srhd.org , and
- WHEREAS, Nurses, as leaders in health promotion and disease prevention, have the knowledge, skills and leadership abilities to incorporate routine BMI screening, evaluation and treatment in health care practice utilizing evidence-based guidelines and conduct the research necessary to evaluate the effectiveness.
- BE IT THEREFORE,
- RESOLVED, That the WSNA write a position statement in support of routine BMI screening, evaluation and treatment utilizing the evidence based clinical guidelines on *Identification, Evaluation and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults* developed by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute in collaboration with the National Institutes of Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institutes of Health available at website http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/obesity/ob_home and CDC's *BMI-for-Age Growth Chart Guidelines* at website <http://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/> .
- AND BE IT FURTHER
- RESOLVED, That the WSNA support and promote a research component on the effectiveness of implementing BMI screening, evaluation and treatment in health care practice, worksite wellness programs, and the community at large,
- AND BE IT FURTHER
- RESOLVED, That the WSNA support and promote coding and payment mechanisms for implementing routine BMI screening, evaluation and treatment in accordance with the national evidence based guidelines,
- AND BE IT FURTHER
- RESOLVED, That the WSNA develops a BMI screening, evaluation and treatment resolution to present to the next ANA House of Delegates for approval.

Unanimously adopted by the WSNA General Assembly, May 5, 2005

COST IMPACT

1. Please state why resolution is proposed:

Overweight and obesity in adults and children have reached epidemic proportions nationwide, posing a major public health threat. Overweight and obesity is recognized as the leading health indicator for serious health problems such as diabetes type 2, cardiovascular heart disease, stroke, hypertension, certain cancers (breast, uterine, colon and prostate). The economic costs are \$117 billion yearly in direct and indirect costs.

Body Mass Index (BMI) identifies individuals who are underweight, overweight or obese and at risk of developing preventable weight-related diseases and illness. Since BMI ranges are based on the effect body weight has on disease and death, routine BMI screening, evaluation and treatment is critical to our national, state and local efforts to prevent and decrease overweight and obesity.

This resolution provides a way that nurses can take a leadership role in promoting quality health care for consumers through education, advocacy and influencing health care policy in the State of Washington.

2. What would adoption achieve?

a. Empower nurses to:

- (1) Identify people at risk, evaluate and intervene to improve the health of people
- (2) Be an active participant in the fight against overweight and obesity
- (3) Improve the health care delivery system where they work
- (4) Prevent and decrease levels of overweight and obesity
- (5) Provide "Quality Health Care"
- (6) Decrease incidents of weight-related diseases, disability and premature death
- (7) Help decrease health care costs

3. How will proposal benefit the profession and/or the Association?

- a. Development of collaborative partnerships with others working on the obesity issue
- b. Research opportunities
- c. National, state and local recognition

4. What would be the cost impact (to degree known)

The dollar amount is unknown.

By using systems already in place, the costs should be minimal .

Communicate via email, newsletters, committee meetings and district meetings and conventions.

Guidelines can be downloaded from websites listed in the resolution.

5. Would it require

A sub-committee or task force of the Professional Nursing and Health Care Council to draft the position statement.

Resolution submitted by: Inland Empire Nurses Association, District #4

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