

ADDRESSING OBESITY: A Chronic Disease Requiring Whole-of-Society Action

Municipal leaders can help build healthier, more equitable communities



UNDERSTANDING OBESITY



- Obesity is influenced by genetic, environmental, and social factors
- Obesity is unequally distributed due to: social and economic barriers, environmental and commercial influences, healthcare access and system barriers, and life-course and structural factors
- Requires early recognition, clinical diagnosis, and long-term, person-centred management
- Development is not determined by individual behaviour alone

ENABLING HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENTS



- Shape food systems, housing, transport, and built environments to promote health and reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases, including obesity as a chronic disease
- Embed equity and access into urban planning and local services, addressing unequal risk exposure
- Collaborate across public health, healthcare, education, and community networks
- Support early recognition, referral pathways, and access to appropriate management

COMMUNICATING WITHOUT STIGMA



- Use person-first, non-stigmatising language (e.g. "person with obesity", not "obese person")
- Promote inclusive, compassionate communication of evidence-based messages that support dignity, access to care, and equity
- Recognise obesity as a biologically driven, adiposity-based chronic disease
- Reject narratives that frame obesity as controllable through willpower or behaviour alone, avoiding blame and stereotypes