



# **Annual Report** 2021



The Third Annual Report of the National Association of Clinical Obesity Services (NACOS) reports on the activity of the Association for the calendar year 2021.

Prepared in November 2022 for delivery at the third NACOS AGM, at 6.00pm on Monday  $5^{th}$  December 2022

### **About NACOS**

### **About the National Association of Clinical Obesity Services**

NACOS is an association of clinicians and representatives of organisations providing clinical obesity services in Australia. We are committed to improving the quality of care for people living with obesity and its complications. NACOS is leading a broad programme of activities to achieve this outcome.

NACOS was established on 26 October 2018 and registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria on 25 January 2019.

#### Vision

Our vision is to live in a society that provides timely and equitable access to the best available care for the effective management of obesity and its complications.

### **Goals and Objectives**

NACOS is committed to driving improvements in the quality of obesity care by providing education on the management of obesity and implementing and evaluating new evidence-based policies and practices in Australia's health system.

The purposes of the incorporated association are to promote high-quality care according to the principles and standards proposed in the National Framework for Clinical Obesity Services.

In addition, we will work alongside our partner organisations to:

- reduce the stigma of obesity and clinical obesity services and treatments
- engage with priority stakeholders and representatives of high-need cohorts
- enable access to information and networking opportunities for all clinical obesity health care providers (HCPs) focussed on the provision of quality care for people living with obesity or weight-related health impairments
- develop and disseminate clinical obesity knowledge and education programmes
- encourage and support specialist/surgical obesity services to collaborate with all relevant HCPs to optimise the delivery of quality care, especially in poorly resourced areas



### **Committee Members**



Samantha Hocking, President



John Dixon Vice President



Evan Atlantis, Secretary



Nic Kormas, Treasurer



Shirley Alexander,



Ahmad Aly,



Paul Dugdale,



Teresa Girolamo,



# **President's Report**

When NACOS was founded in 2018, its members were representatives from clinical obesity services in public hospital across Australia. Acknowledging that most obesity care is delivered in a community rather than hospital setting, NACOS has expanded its membership to include all health care practitioners and allied health clinicians with an interest in providing obesity care. This has led to a growth in NACOS membership. NACOS welcomes its new members and aims to grow its membership across a wide range of health care professional groups providing obesity care. NACOS strongly supports multidisciplinary obesity management and seeks to represent and support clinicians from diverse professions. Furthermore, it intends to diversify the composition of the NACOS Committee to reflect the diversity of its members.

One of the key events for NACOS in 2021 was the delivery of our case-based educational webinars 'NACOS Case Conundrums' which were supported by an unrestricted educational grant from Novo Nordisk and facilitated by Ogilvy Health. Four webinars were delivered between August and November 2021. The first webinar entitled "It doesn't matter what I do, I just never lose weight" presented by Dr Nic Kormas and Dr Janet Franklin had 142 registered participants with 78 attending the live event. The second held on September 8 with a bariatric surgery focus was presented by Dr Ahmed Aly and Dr John Dixon. The webinar was entitled "My sleeve gastrectomy isn't working anymore; do you think I should have a gastric bypass?" with 40 registered attendees and 20 attendees watching live. The third webinar "The medication you prescribed for weight loss isn't working; is there another medication I can try?" was presented by Dr Priya Sumithran and Dr Ravind Pandher with 29 attendees. The final Case-Conundrum entitled "I would like to have a baby; is there anything I need to do because of my previous bariatric surgery?" was presented by Dr Sean Seeho and Dr Arianne Sweeting on November 4. There were 70 registered attendees with 38 attending live. NACOS extends our thanks to all presenters of the Case Conundrums for 2021. Due to the success of this series, NACOS has confirmed ongoing sponsorship from Novo Nordisk to continue this educational activity in 2023.

NACOS was invited to present a symposium at the Australian Diabetes Congress in 2021. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions, it was held as a virtual event. The symposium presented two perspectives, from Prof Gary Wittert and Dr Ted Wu, on the management of obesity in individuals with Type 2 diabetes. This session was well-received and complimented for its strong clinical focus. NACOS will continue to liaise with the Australian Diabetes Society regarding future involvement in the Australian Diabetes Congress.

NACOS continues to represent the clinician viewpoint in policy and guideline development. NACOS was able to contribute feedback through our involvement with the Obesity Collective to the National Obesity Prevention strategy. NACOS was also invited to contribute feedback to the "Management of eating disorders for people with higher weight: clinical practice guideline" developed by the National Eating Disorders Collaboration.

In collaboration with the Australian Diabetes Society (ADS) and Novo Nordisk, NACOS contributed to the development of a new initiative project called "Find A GP". Novo Nordisk has launched a non-promotional website that is designed to easily connect people living with obesity and local general practitioners who have an interest in weight management. Participation is voluntary for NACOS members who can self-register at <a href="https://findmygp.com.au/register/">https://findmygp.com.au/register/</a>.

In 2021 NACOS, continued its collaboration with Healthed on developing a series of online mini courses on clinical obesity education targeting nurse health care professionals. In 2021, a mini course on Very Low Energy Diets for Obesity Management was released.



### **NACOS** projects

We have two industry funded projects in progress. The project entitled 'Decision Aid for Clinical Obesity Services (DACOS)', is a small pilot funded through a joint industry (Novo Nordisk via NACOS) and Western Sydney University partnership grant. The purpose of the project is to develop and test an innovative software program to help GPs and their patients make informed decisions using instant computing of unique patient information (i.e., each unique combination of patient characteristics and treatment preferences) to guide evidence-based treatment pathways for weight loss and related health problems over time.

#### Preliminary results (to be prepared for publication in 2023):

We are developing prediction models from a small sample of real-world data (eight clinics, seven public, one private). Initial results show that patients aged >25 years and not using CPAP, and those aged >25 years using CPAP without a history of depression, achieved twice higher rates of weight loss success (define by ≥15% from baseline) at 12 months than their counterparts after bariatric surgery. For non-surgical interventions, patients aged >50 years, without a history of anxiety and who never missed scheduled clinics without a history of depression, and those with a history of depression but married achieved higher rates of weight loss success (defined by ≥5% from baseline) than their counterparts.

The project entitled 'A new screening tool for Activating Weight management in primary cARE (AWARE): a pilot study', is a small pilot funded through a joint industry (iNova via NACOS) and Western Sydney University partnership grant. It aims to develop a brief screening tool for patients with possible weight-related complications to assess its feasibility for helping their GPs initiate weight management discussions and treatments. We developed and validated a brief risk screening tool (EOSS-2 Risk Tool), focusing on health status rather than weight status, designed to enable GP communication with their patients about weight management. The results of these studies have been published and are available via open access:

https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/12/6/e061251.abstract https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0259220 https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/12/11/e063659.abstract

### **Membership Report**

By the end of 2021, NACOS had around 90 financial members, up from 50 in 2020.

Associate Professor Samantha Hocking MBBS, MMed(Clin Epi), FRACP, PhD President



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## **Treasurer's Report**

I am pleased to report on a successfully funded second year of our operations. Despite waiving membership subscription fees due to the disruption to our activities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the year's activities were fully funded with the support of our sponsors with retained earnings of \$43,588.

The appendix contains copies of the 2021 financials and compilation report.

Dr. Nic Kormas (FRACP) Secretary & Treasurer

