



Policy Using People First Language and Images in Professional Development

Reminder to Moderators:

Help us foster a positive learning environment by using people-first language during today’s presentation and case-study discussions. Using terms such as “people or patients living with obesity” instead of referring to people or patients as “obese” is a standard for respectfully addressing people with chronic diseases. Everyone is here to learn from each other, so we encourage everyone to practice using this language!

Message for presentation speakers, written content, and discussions from participants:

Please remember to use inclusive language and images in your oral presentations, written content and during discussions. People-first language is the standard for respectfully addressing people with chronic disease, rather than labeling them by their illness. Because of the importance of reducing bias associated with obesity, authors should avoid using “obese” as an adjective or noun to describe an individual person or group of people, but instead use terms such as “people living with obesity”, this also includes language and images that could be interpreted as stereotyping, biased or prejudiced (i.e., headless bodies, unhealthy food or sedentary depictions, smaller vs larger body as good vs bad, etc.). Please use respectful images in your presentations (refer to the links below for royalty-free images).

Words to avoid	Words to use instead
Obese Morbid/Morbidly obese Severely obese/severe obesity Super obese	People living with obesity A person living with obesity People/person with obesity
Diabetic(s)	People/person(s) living with diabetes
Example: “One in four Canadians are living with obesity” rather than “One in four Canadians are obese”	

Unbiased Image Banks

Obesity Canada: Perfect at Any Size Gallery: <https://obesitycanada.ca/resources/image-bank/>
UConn Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity Media Gallery: <https://uconnruddcenter.org/media-gallery/>
Obesity Action Coalition Image Gallery: www.obesityaction.org/get-educated/public-resources/oac-image-gallery/
World Obesity Image Bank: www.worldobesity.org/resources/image-bank

Resources:

Guidelines for Media Portrayals of Individuals Affected by Obesity, please [click here](#) (PDF).
Weight Bias resource: <https://obesitycanada.ca/weight-bias/>
How to Use People-First Language: <https://obesitycanada.ca/oc-news/use-people-first-language/>
People-first language video: <https://fb.watch/9lobUGow0I/>
Language Matters: Obesity <http://obesitycanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Obesity-Language-Matters-FINAL-2.pdf>