



## **Physicians and Patients: Type 2 Diabetes and Weight Survey Fact Sheet**

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 24 million people in the United States have diabetes, an increase of more than 3 million in two years. This means that nearly eight percent of the U.S. population has diabetes, most of whom have type 2 diabetes. Estimates show that another 57 million people have pre-diabetes, a condition that puts people at increased risk for diabetes. In addition, about two-thirds of U.S. adults – 133.6 million – are overweight. Of these, 63.3 million are obese.

The Behavioral Diabetes Institute and Amylin Pharmaceuticals collaborated on the design of the survey. The survey was sponsored by Amylin Pharmaceuticals and conducted by Yankelovich, part of The Futures Company. The national phone survey of 200 physicians treating with type 2 diabetes each month and 703 adults with type 2 diabetes sought to understand the attitudes of physicians regarding weight management for their patients with type 2 diabetes as part of a treatment approach to the disease, while also examining the interaction between physicians and patients regarding type 2 diabetes and weight control.

### **Key findings are as follows:**

#### ***There is a communication gap, both in frequency and context, between physicians and type 2 diabetes patients over weight loss issues***

- Eight in ten doctors say they discuss weight issues with their patients every/almost every visit, yet only four in ten patients acknowledge this frequency of weight discussion
- 90 percent of physicians surveyed report that they tell their overweight patients to lose weight. However, when the surveyed patients were asked whether or not their doctor ever suggested that they lose weight, only 66 percent of them said yes

#### ***When physicians and their type 2 diabetes patients are talking about weight loss, it is not always in specifics***

- More than half of the physicians said their patients understand that diabetes medications can cause weight gain, yet only 34 percent of surveyed patients report being warned by their physician that this could occur
- While more than half of patients do report having been told to eliminate certain food from their diet or referred to a dietitian, only 27 percent of patients say their physician prescribed specific recommendations for exercise and less than 20 percent say their physician suggested a commercial diet plan such as Weight Watchers

#### ***Physicians face a number of frustrations in helping their patients with type 2 diabetes lose weight***

- Only 7 percent of physicians agree they've had success helping patients lose weight, and most (54 percent) feel frustrated that they can't do more
- Physicians see patients' reluctance to change lifestyle as the biggest barrier to achieving the level of care they would like for their patients
- While some physicians say that their patients don't try hard enough to lose weight, they also recognize that willpower alone is not enough.
- Physicians see the lack of support for education services and prevention by the healthcare system as another major barrier to successful treatment of type 2 diabetes

#### ***Patients blame themselves for not being able to manage their weight***

- Losing weight is important to most (75 percent) patients with type 2 diabetes, yet only one-third feel very confident in their ability to lose weight
- Nearly half of surveyed patients (46 percent) believe that losing weight is mostly a matter of willpower and if they try hard enough, they can lose weight.
- Only 11 percent of patients agree that their physician does not do enough to help them lose weight