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Tackling childhood obesity by implementing an integrated care approach

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Publication date:
2020

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in Tilburg University Research Portal](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

van de Goor, I., de Laat, S., van Mil, M., Jacobs-van Der Bruggen, M. A. M., & van Mil, E. G. (2020). *Tackling childhood obesity by implementing an integrated care approach*. Poster session presented at 16th World Congress on Public Health 2020, Online.

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Introduction

This study evaluated an integrated care approach focusing on inter-sectoral collaboration aimed to tackle childhood overweight.

Method

- **Fourteen professionals** from the three sectors were interviewed.
- **Face to face semi-structured** interviews
- To determine in and outside sector **collaboration**, perceived **outcomes** and **hindering and facilitating factors**.

Results

- **Collaboration** within each sector was adequately established. All were in contact with **the central care provider**. However, **minimal contact with social domain partners** was reported.
- **Hindering factors:** the complexity of childhood overweight, not knowing network partners, unclarity in referrals, feedback, roles and responsibilities. Also, frequent changes in policy and personnel, lack of a visible leader, funding and time.
- **Facilitating factors:** a positive attitude towards intersectoral collaboration, short communication lines, a shared vision, trusting each other's expertise, and formalized agreements and periodic meetings with partners.

Tackling childhood obesity by implementing an integrated care approach

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Key messages

- In daily practice professionals experience structural factors hindering network collaboration as required for an integrated care approach.
- Specific attention for organizational aspects is required to optimize the functioning of networks linking professionals from public health, medical and social domains, essential in preventing childhood overweight.

