

Active Rehabilitation Improves Function and Health of a Morbidly Obese 15 Year Old Boy: A Case Study of Treatment Provided by the Be Inspired Foundation

Gregory Levin ¹ Darren Webb ¹ Rebecca Kidd ¹, Shane Johnstone ¹

¹ Be Inspired Foundation, Perth, WA

BACKGROUND:

- The Be Inspired Foundation was founded to provide scholarships for active rehabilitation to disadvantaged Western Australian youth living with chronic disease, cancer, disabilities or major trauma.
- Beneficiaries receive support for 12 months.
- This case study examines the effects of this novel model of care on a young male living with morbid obesity.

METHODS:

- A 15 year old male, was referred by his paediatrician for allied health services to support management of morbid obesity.
- At baseline he presented with a body mass 195kg and low functional capacity.
- A progressive exercise program was initiated in combination with counselling once a fortnight and four sessions with an accredited practising dietitian.
- Only resistance exercise was prescribed for the first three months.
- Progressively the total volume increased from one to three times per day.
- After 12 weeks, daily aerobic activity was introduced.
- Ongoing group exercise sessions 2x/wk from 6 months.



Building lifelong independence

RESULTS:

Over the 12-month intervention, clinically meaningful changes were apparent in multiple physical and functional domains.

	Baseline	6 months	12 Months
Body mass (kg)	195	184	184
Height (cm)	164	165	165
BMI	72.5	67.7	67.7
400m Walk (s)	453	320	315
Modified Push Up (reps)	2	15	15
Counter Movement Jump (cm)	11	15	19.5
Sit & Reach (cm)	-15	+1	+1
3m Timed Up & Go (s)	8.1	6.8	6.7

- Body mass reduced by 11kg.
- 30% improvement in aerobic capacity represented in 400m walk improvement.
- Upper body strength was greater at 6 and 12 months compared to baseline.
- Lower body power increased by 77% measured using countermovement jump height.
- Qualitative feedback was equally positive:

“He enjoys his sessions with [the exercise physiologist] and now he is going to a group session once a week to try and get him back into the community and around people”.

CONCLUSION:

- Active rehabilitation improved physical and functional capacity.
- Program resulted in long-term lifestyle changes.
- The Be Inspired Foundation model of care is able to support individuals with complex conditions who lack access to health services.