**Topic: The evaluation of an online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) Weight Loss program**

**Background:** Obesity is considered the sixth leading cause of mortality in the world today according to the World Health Organization. Doctors site lack of time, training and resources, staff support, and adequate reimbursement as common reasons why they fail to treat obesity effectively. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy ( CBT) is considered one of the 1st line treatments for weight management (RACGP guidelines).. Online Health promotion including weight has been proven to be an effective strategy in promoting self efficacy, motivation and confidence. An online CBT weight management program can provide participants the ability to manage their weight anywhere in the world, including rural areas where services may be scarce.

**Objectives:** To evaluate the impact on patients’ 1) confidence 2) self efficacy and 3) depression and anxiety scales when using an online CBT weight loss program

**Methods:** This is an observational cohort study of 120 overweight (BMI > 25) patients completing an online CBT weight management program over 12 weeks. Patients aged between 18 and 65 were recruited from General Practice and Weight Management clinics in Melbourne. At the beginning and end of the 12 weeks were asked to complete 3 scales: 1) **Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS21)** 2) The Emotional Eating Questionnaire (EEQ) (10 items) and SCIExerciseSelf (ESES) (10 items). Physical measures such as weight and waist circumference were also taken and compared.

**Results:** Patients showed significant reduced levels of psychological distress, improved exercise and dietary self efficacy on completion of the online program.

**Conclusions:** This study demonstrates that online interventions have the potential to improve health behaviours such as weight management. This is especially important for rural areas where services may not be adequate showing that self efficacy and confidence can be improved without face-to-face contact.