

PRESS RELEASE

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World Obesity Day Europe Awards Winners Announced

Organisations and individuals from six countries have been named winners of the World Obesity Day Europe Awards for 2023.

The awards are presented annually by the European Coalition for People Living with Obesity (ECPO) and the European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO) for activities and initiatives related to World Obesity Day in Europe.

The winners for 2023 are the Irish Coalition for People Living with Obesity (ICPO); Amici Obesi Onlus, Italy; Ariel University, Assuta Medical Centers, Meuhedet Health Services, and Maccabi Health Services, Israel; The Hungarian Society for the Study of Obesity; The Slovak Obesity Association, the Slovak Chamber of Pharmacy and Bratislava Self-Governing Region, Slovakia; and The Croatian State Referral Centre for the Treatment of Obesity and the Croatian Hypertension League, Croatia.

The ECPO Award for The Best Public Engagement Programme has been awarded to the Irish Coalition for People Living with Obesity (ICPO) (<https://icpobesity.org/>).

ICPO launched their first podcast titled “Sticks and Stones may break my bones, but names will also hurt me”. It involved a discussion between people living with obesity – Linda, Catherine, Maura, and Susie – following a theme of how “Words Matter”.

The podcast is an educational resource on Stigma and Mental Health discussions between patients and advocates from ICPO.

The EASO Award for the Best Collaborative Project has been awarded jointly to the Croatian State Referral Centre for the Treatment of Obesity (<https://www.kbc-zagreb.hr/>) and the Croatian Hypertension League (<https://h-liga.hr/>) and to the Slovak Obesity Association (<https://obesitas.sk/>), the Slovak Chamber of Pharmacy (<https://www.slek.sk/>) and the Bratislava Self-Governing Region (<https://bratislavskykraj.sk/bratislava-region/>), Slovakia.

The Croatian State Referral Centre for the Treatment of Obesity and the Croatian Hypertension League organised a panel event on Changing Perspectives. An expert panel raised tricky questions about communication on obesity, as well as about prevention and treatment. The event was also broadcast online and was featured in several TV and radio interviews.

The Slovak Obesity Association, the Slovak Chamber of Pharmacy and the Bratislava Self-Governing Region staged a collaborative project focused on improving obesity prevention by providing the measurements of obesity risk factors in pharmacies. More than 50 % of participants were directed to obesity specialists because of their high Body Mass Index (BMI).

The EASO Award for the Best National Training Programme has been awarded jointly to The Hungarian Society for the Study of Obesity (<http://elhizastudomany.hu/hun>) and several organisations from Israel - Ariel University, Assuta Medical Centers, Meuhedet Health Services, and Maccabi Health Services (websites currently unavailable).

The Hungarian Society organised a Postgraduate Course on World Obesity Day Europe on March 4. The course offered credit points for medical doctors and health professionals. The scientific programme focused on a holistic approach to address the rising obesity epidemic, including novel diagnostic procedures, multidisciplinary treatment, and prevention strategies.

Maccabi Health Services is Israel's second-largest Health Maintenance Organisation (HMO), serving 2.3 million insured members, and Meuhedet is Israel's third largest, with 1.3 million insured members. Together, they represent more than a third of the population in Israel.

During the period of World Obesity Day, an online 15-minute educational module aiming to reduce weight bias and increase knowledge about obesity was distributed by email to Maccabi Health Services physicians and dietitians and all Meuhedet employees.

In addition, the educational module was distributed to 3,000 Assuta Medical Center employees to coincide with Dietitians Week.

The ECPO Award for the Best Patient Engagement Programme has been awarded to Amici Obesi Onlus, Italy (<https://www.amiciobesi.it/>)

They staged a theatrical event at the Teatro Spazio Tertulliano, Milano, which was the premiere of "Obesity/From", a monologue play about the journey of a person living with obesity since childhood. It was performed by an Italian actress and bariatric surgery patient, Mrs Donatella Liotta.

A public debate between patients and healthcare professionals followed the play.

The difficult judging process

"It was very challenging to select the winners from the many entries we received," said ECPO President, Sólveig Sigurdardóttir. "There were excellent initiatives throughout Europe helping the World Obesity Day Europe campaign to reach an estimated 300 million people."

Planning for World Obesity Day on March 4, 2024, is now underway with the theme Addressing Obesity Together, and ECPO has announced it will be offering three additional awards. The ECPO Award for Best Media Engagement, the ECPO Award for Best Social Media Engagement, and the ECPO Award for Best Participation and Engagement from an obesity-associated non-communicable disease (NCD) organisation.

"World Obesity Day Europe is a wonderful opportunity for people living with obesity to help draw attention to the many challenges they face and to call for greater access to treatment, care, and education. The members of ECPO and our affiliated national organisations are looking forward to participating and organising events again in March," said Solveig.

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Further information on the awards and photos and videos of the award winners can be found on the World Obesity Day Europe website: <https://woday.eu/>

For information on ECPO, please see <https://eurobesity.org/>; and for details on EASO, please see <https://easo.org/>