|  |
| --- |
| **Title of Round table discussion** The power of partnership in real-world program evaluation: a case study  |
| **Conference sub-theme addressed**Build effective, accountable and inclusive governance **Relevant experience or practice**A health insurer together with a service provider, developed and implemented a long-term weight loss maintenance program to support their members following an intensive weight loss program. The 24-month maintenance program (LTMP) is offered to overweight and obese health insurance members in Australia with chronic diseases, providing extended program contact to continue with lifestyle behaviour changes made following an initial 18-week weight loss program (Healthy Weight for Life). Effective governance of collaborative evaluation partnership between organisations is critical for successful delivery of the LTMP to support long-term weight loss, and ultimately increases the impact and value of such health insurance programs to consumers.**Implications for health promotion**We (university researchers) co-produced an evaluation framework in partnership with the service provider and insurer to assess the LTMP implementation and impact. The LTMP is delivered remotely and implemented in the everyday settings of consumers’ lives, encouraging increased control over and improvement to their health. While the partnership experience was positive, challenges included balancing conflicting needs and drivers for the evaluation. Each partner organisation added differing layers and complexity to decision making, prioritisation and timeframes, resulting in a robust and relevant yet pragmatic inter-sectoral evaluation framework. The evaluation extends ‘partnership’ to include consumers in the research process, using their experiences to inform service improvement and enhance consumer engagement.**Implications for sustainable development**The real-world nature of the LTMP provided an opportunity for systematic evaluation with strong practice and sustainability relevance. Our experience finds that an inclusive governance of collaborative partnership with agreed purpose can increase the commitment of all involved in what is traditionally an evaluation-constrained setting. If found effective, the results from this evaluation partnership will build evidence for embedding a maintenance phase into weight loss programs, filling a gap in existing literature. Improved health, wellbeing and quality of life outcomes will aid sustained financial and policy support for such programs. Beyond the health insurance setting, there is potential for similar partnerships to support population level programs to reduce the ongoing burden of chronic diseases. |