

Balance @Work

A combined guideline and research project on prevention of weight gain among employees

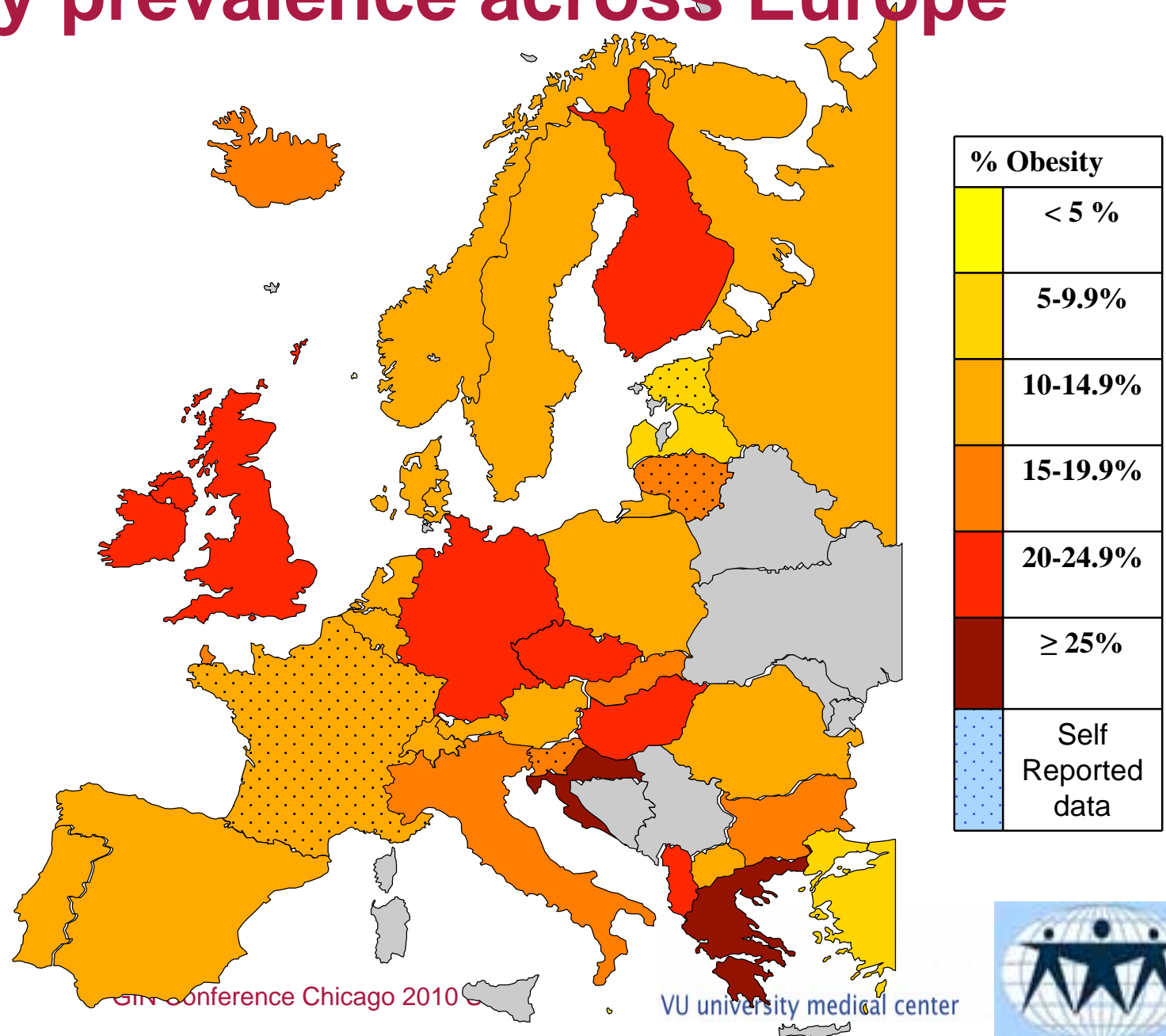
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Obesity prevalence across Europe

2000-2005



Nederlandse
Vereniging voor
nvab
Arbeids- en Bedrijfsgezondheidskunde

© International Obesity TaskForce 2005

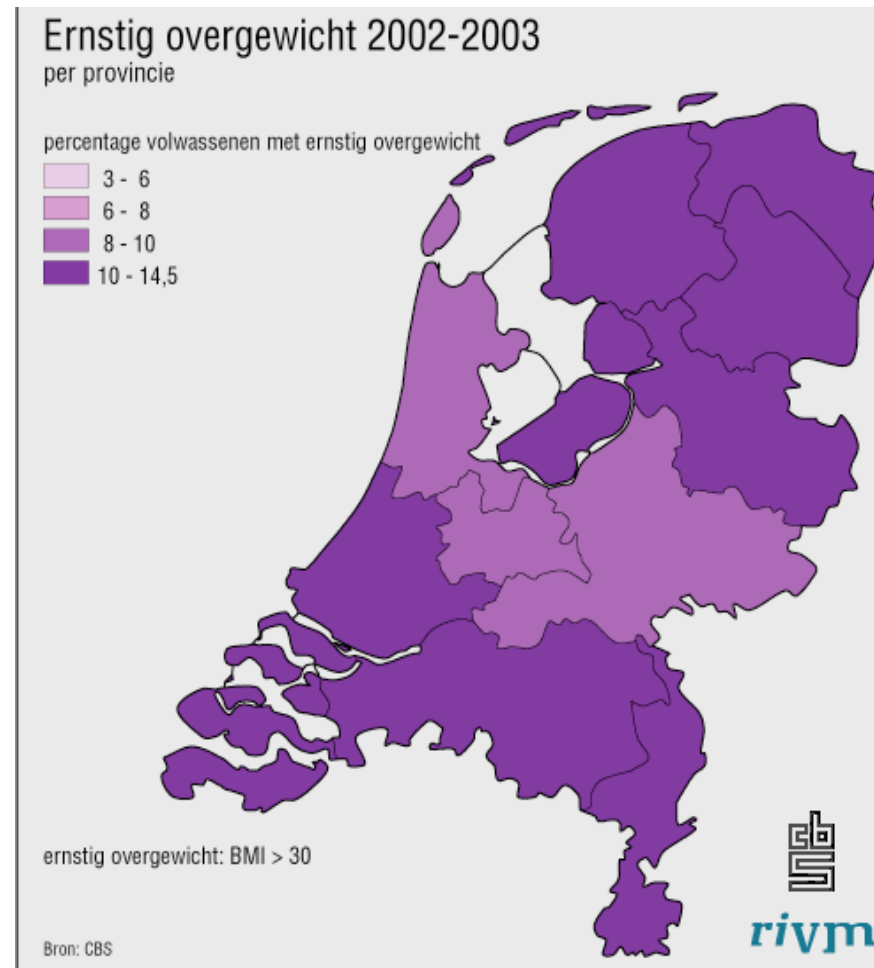
GIN conference Chicago 2010

VU university medical center

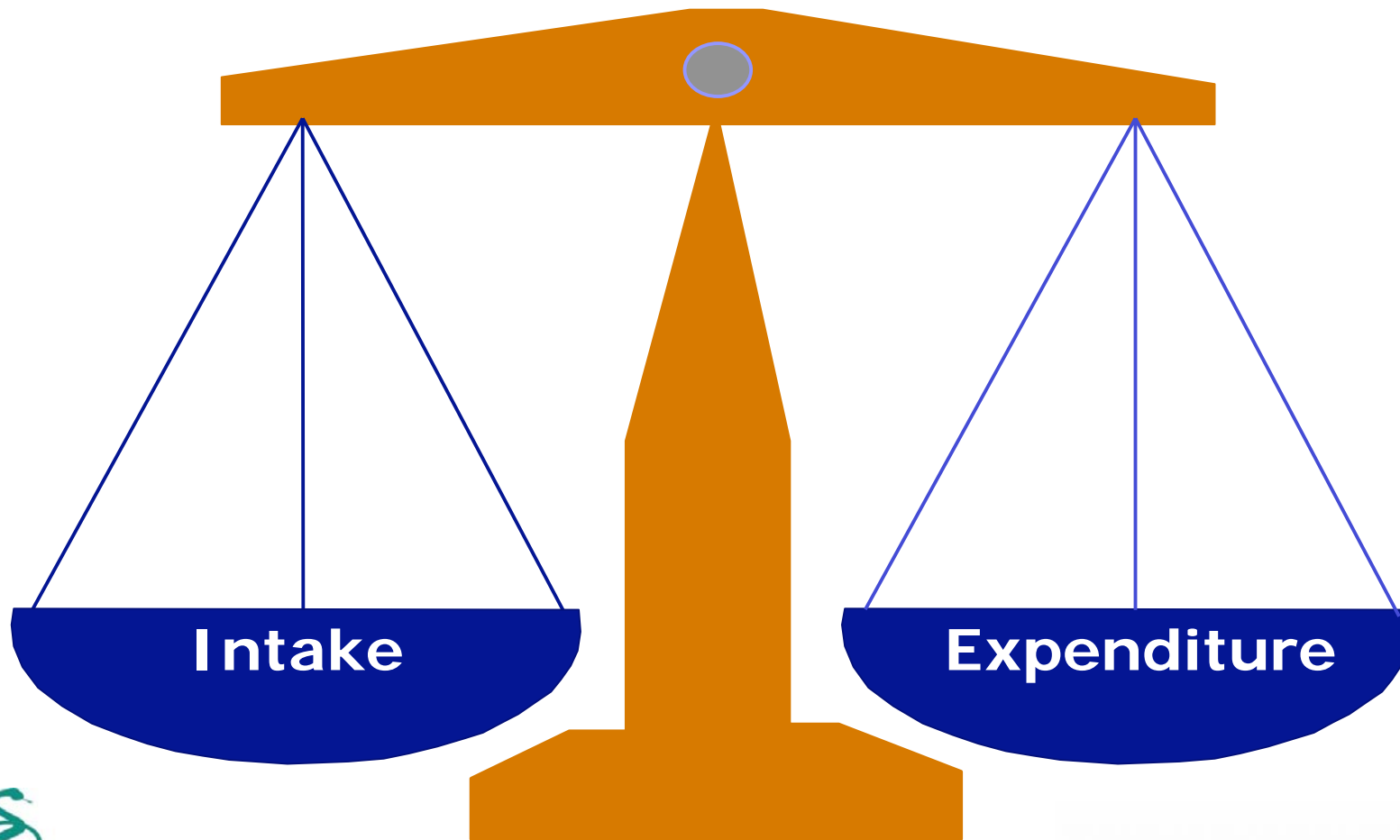


Obesity prevalence in the Netherlands

2002-2003



Energy balance



Review 2004 (Proper et al.)

Lifestyle interventions on physical activity and nutrition:

- could be effective in the Occupational Health setting
- feasible for Occupational Physicians (OPs) in the Netherlands (NVAB)



However...

Hardly implemented by OPs!

- Lack of knowledge, evidence-based methods, and strategies in work context
- No guideline(s) for OPs
- Interviews: a need for tools in daily practice



“Stop smoking, quit drinking, eat less, exercise more! Are you some kind of health nut?”

Aim

Balance @Work

1. Develop
2. Evaluate
3. (Pre-)implement a weight gain prevention guideline for OPs.



Development of guideline

Netherlands Society of Occupational Medicine	Intervention Mapping protocol
1) Recruiting a project group	1) Needs assessment
2) Context analysis and formulation clinical questions	2) Defining program objectives
3) Discussion of literature, existing evidence, and other considerations	3) Selecting theory- based intervention methods and practical strategies
4) First draft of a guideline	4) Design of the intervention program
5) Commentary phase	5) Adoption and implementation plan
6) Final test version of the guideline	6) Evaluation plan



Goals

Physical activity:

- ↑ At work and in leisure time
- ↑ Active transport
- ↓ Sedentary behavior

Nutrition:

- ↑ Fruit
- ↓ Snacks



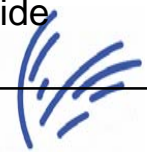
Development of guideline

- 1) Evidence from literature
- 2) Meet needs of all stakeholders: interviews and focus groups with 3 employers, 33 employees and 7 OPs
- 3) Consensus: project group
- 4) Best practice: commentary phase



The guideline, summarized

A	Prevention at the environmental level advice for the employer
1	Assess obesogenic risk factors in the work environment using the environment scan.
2	Assess if current health policy is adequate.
3	Inform and advise the employer and workers' representative council.
B	Prevention at the individual level (MIS) advice for the employee
	During all next steps: maintain good contact with the employee, emphasize confidentiality of results and address resistance to change.
1	Identify individuals at risk for weight gain at the periodical health examination.
2	Set the agenda: which performance objective or other subject would the employee like to address.
3	Assess motivation for change and provide stage matched advice to change behavior:
4	Plan next counseling session
C	Evaluation and Maintenance
1	Evaluate prevention at the environmental level after 6 months using the environment scan.
2	Evaluate prevention at the individual level after 6 months using the employees action plan.
3	Maintain prevention at the environmental level by setting prevention of weight gain on the company agenda once a year and address relapse prevention.
4	Maintain prevention at the individual level by addressing the employees long term goals and provide permanent attention for weight gain prevention through active information.



Prevention at the Environmental level

- What are the environmental risk factors for unhealthy behavior and overweight? (e.g. commuting/transportation plan, use of stairs, sports stimulation, food/catering facilities)
- Is there a health policy aimed at prevention of weight gain?
- What is the advice to the employer?

→ *Environment scan*



Prevention at the Individual level

- Which employees are unhealthy (physical activity, dietary behavior, weight) according to norms/standards?
- What is the task of the OP in advising the employee?
- Is the employee motivated to change?

→ *Counseling based on Motivational Interviewing*



Evaluation and Maintenance

Evaluation

- Is the companies health policy adapted?
- Are the goals for individual employees reached?

Maintenance

- How is attention for health maintained in the organisation?
- How can the employees maintain their healthy behavior?
- Is there attention for relapse?

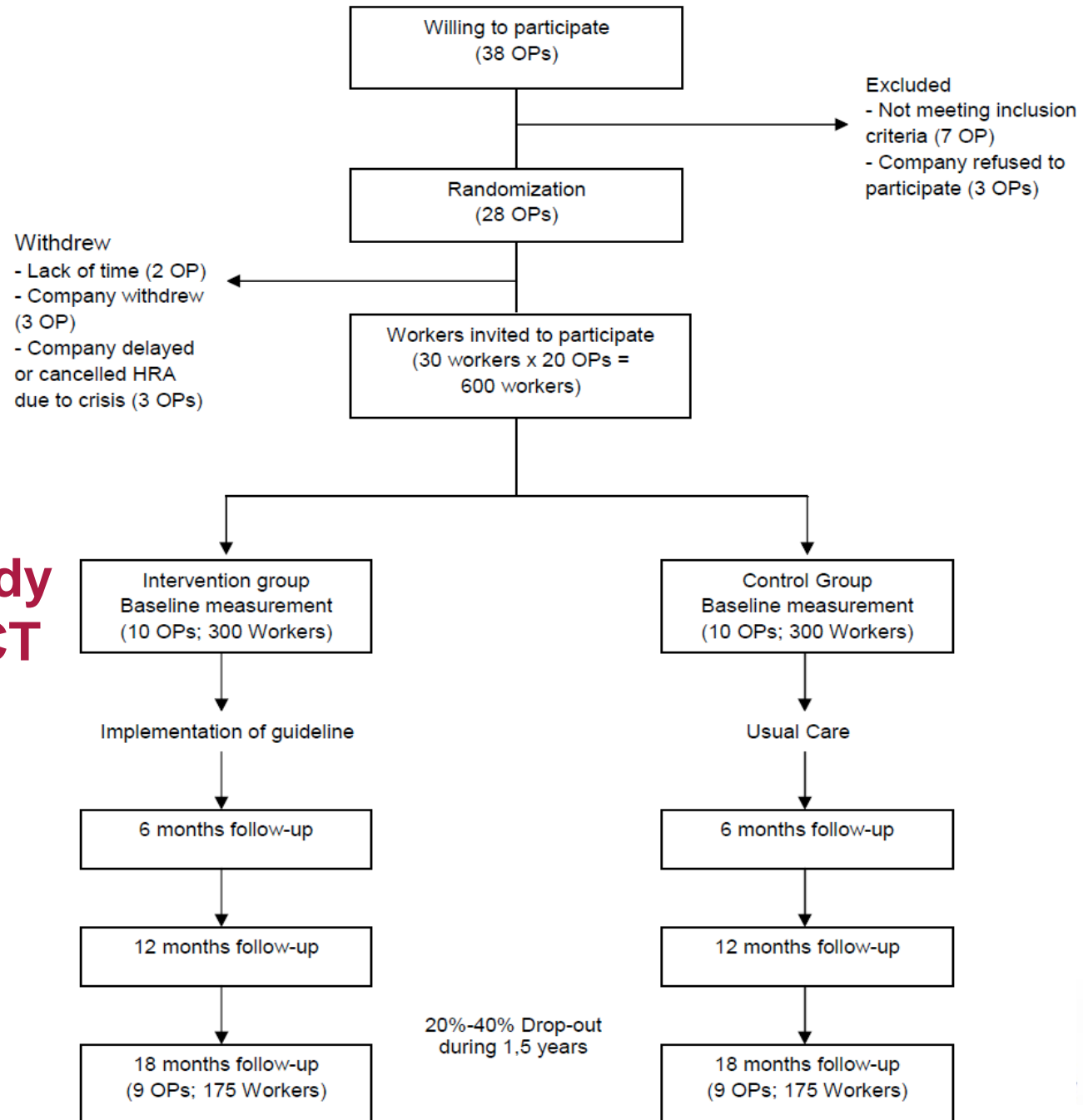


Intervention: an RCT among employees

- RCT: 26 OPs and 600 employees
- 4 Questionnaire's during 1.5 years
- Measurements: waist circumference, PA, dietary behavior, absenteeism, productivity, cost-effectiveness
- Binder for OPs with tools en protocols
- Materials for employees
 - Pedometer, logbook, waist circumference measure, information brochures



Flowchart study population RCT



Discussion

Results.....? RCT in progress

—A substantial extension of the development period: 42 months

—Cost

+ In complex or relatively new topics this may be a feasible and valuable approach.

+ The time lost may be regained because of the gathered experience with (pre-)implementation of the draft guideline.



Reference

- Verweij LM, Proper KI, Weel ANH, Hulshof CTJ, van Mechelen W. Design of the Balance@Work project: systematic development, evaluation and implementation of an occupational health guideline aimed at the prevention of weight gain among employees. *BMC Public Health* 2009;9:461 (doi:10.1186/1471-2458-9-461).

