

LETTER TO HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ABOUT WEIGHT-NEUTRAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Dear _____,

While I am aware that losing weight through diet and exercise works for some people, I am also aware that most people either fail to lose the amount they want to and/or fail to maintain their weight loss in the long term. Given my history of unsuccessful dieting, including trying

_____, _____, and _____, I believe I am in the larger group of people who will ultimately be unsuccessful in losing weight with a diet and exercise plan. Given that some research¹ suggests focusing on weight can contribute to mental health conditions, an unhealthy relationship with food and even weight gain over time, I am resolving not to focus on my weight in the future.

I am hoping you will be willing to continue to support my health and wellbeing without focusing on weight, and would ask you to treat me as if my weight and BMI were acceptable to you.

I understand you may have professional reservations about this approach, and I want to assure you that I remain committed to my health and wellbeing. I would ask that we try a twelve-month trial period as an 'experiment' to see how we both feel about it.

You may also be interested in reviewing a randomised controlled trial² suggesting weight-neutral approaches can result in improved psychological and medical health outcomes, and may be favourable when compared with traditional diet and exercise approaches in the medium term.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter, and for your consideration. I'm very much looking forward to paving my new way forward with you if you are willing to support me.

Sincerely,

P.S. This direction has been prompted by the work of psychologist Glenn Mackintosh, who supports medical and allied health professionals throughout Australia. Should you want to discuss this further, he is more than happy to correspond with you regarding what you think may be the best option for me.

1 C.G. Fairburn & S.J. Beglin, 'Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q 6.0)', Appendix in C.G. Fairburn, *Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Eating Disorders*. (Guilford Press, New York, 2008); E.A., Schur, S.R. Heckbert and J.H. Goldberg, 'The association of restrained eating with weight change over time in a community-based sample of twins', *Obesity*, 18(6) (2010), pp. 1146–52; T.L. Tylka, R.M. Calogero & Danielsdorir, 'Is intuitive eating the same as flexible dietary control? Their links to each other and wellbeing could provide an answer', *Appetite*, 95 (2015), pp 166–75.

2 L. Bacon, J.S. Stern, M.D. Van Loan & N. Keim (2005), Size acceptance and intuitive eating improve health for obese, chronic female dieters', *Journal of the American Dietary Association*, 105(6) (2005), pp. 929–36.