

\$5.35 Billion U.S. Medical Weight Loss Programs Now Have The Momentum

Affordable Care Act Creates Huge Opportunities For MDs

Tampa FL, January 27, 2015: Marketdata Enterprises, Inc., a leading independent market research publisher of “off-the-shelf” studies about service industries since 1979, has examined diet market company performance and consumer trends for 25 years, and sees stronger growth for medical weight loss providers than commercial companies.

“Many people don’t like Obamacare, but the Affordable Care Act is the greatest thing since sliced bread for medical weight loss programs. The Preventative Health Benefit mandates insurance company coverage for obesity screening and counseling, by qualified weight loss providers. Only medically supervised programs have the personnel qualified to do it—not the commercial chains.”, according to Research Director, John LaRosa.

Medical weight loss programs will have the competitive advantage in 2015. Why? Because the ACA’s Preventative Care Benefit, which took effect Jan. 1, 2014, mandates that insurers pay for diet programs for people with a BMI of 30+, that are counseled by qualified weight loss professionals (MDs, RDs, PAs, Nurses). This benefit is worth \$1,625/year and covers up to 14 counseling sessions in 6 months, with the Medicare population included. This is an unprecedented opportunity for medically supervised weight loss programs to provide a higher level of service than commercial diet centers--essentially free of charge!

Medical weight loss programs have operated in the background of the diet industry for decades. The commercial companies spend hundreds of millions each year on national TV ads and get a lot more exposure. However, lately they have been struggling. This is the best time in decades for Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Dietitians and Physicians Assistants to grab the reins and start their own weight loss practice or purchase a medical franchise. Consultants have proven that MDs can add \$250,000 to \$1+ million per year in revenues by doing so.

Why Medical Programs?

Adding weight loss to a physician's practice is a natural. Consumers already have a long-term relationship with and trust their doctor. Doctors have a built-in client base and don't have to spend as much money on marketing and "branding" to reach these patients. Doctors are better able to address obesity-related conditions than commercial chains (high blood pressure, diabetes, pre-diabetes, high cholesterol, post-menopausal hormone imbalance, for example).

Marketdata Findings & Forecasts:

- Medical weight loss programs in the U.S. generated an estimated \$5.35 billion (nearly double the value of commercial chains), via: bariatric surgery (\$2.85 bill.), prescription anti-obesity drugs (\$560 million), Bariatricians' programs (\$488 million), Very Low Calorie Diets (VLCDs) (\$449 million), and programs provided by hospitals, clinics and independent physicians (\$1 billion).
- Marketdata forecasts that more MDs will add weight loss to their practice, to make up for lost income and declining reimbursement. Internists, General Practitioners, Family Doctors and OB/gyns are especially well suited to add weight loss.
- Marketdata forecasts that we will soon see the emergence of more medical entrepreneurs that specialize in weight loss. Nurse Practitioners, Dietitians, and Physicians Assistants will group together to form new companies that deliver a higher level of weight loss counseling to dieters, at little to no cost out-of-pocket. With their own practice, their income is not limited, and liability protection is easily obtained via collaborative practice agreements with local MDs.
- Physicians and other medical professionals desperately need business training in how to set up and run a profitable weight loss program, either as a stand-alone center or adding it to their existing practice. Yet, no clinical associations offer this in-depth training, until now. Marketdata Enterprises is hosting a new conference, called: "Launching A Successful Medical Weight Loss Program", in Orlando, March 13-14. Details at: **DietShow2015.com**. Speakers will cover: set-up, marketing, pricing, staffing, expenses/typical income, use of supplements, types of medical programs, competitors,

how successful MDs do it, reimbursement, how to take advantage of the ACA benefit, and more.

- The trend in weight loss is moving toward medical providers. More retail drugstore chains' are operating healthcare mini-clinics at CVS, Walgreens, Rite Aid, RediClinics and others. They are usually staffed by Physicians Assistants or Nurses, who provide counseling right there in-store. And, it's covered by insurance.
- There is a paradigm shift taking place in the weight loss market—from a focus on diet food and products to SERVICES. Service is now more important than diet foods/drinks—50.7% of the total market value of \$59.8 billion, vs. 49.3% of revenues—for the first time. Insurers will not pay for diet food, but they WILL pay for behavior modification sessions, MD exams, and lab tests.

“Flat is the new growth in the \$60 billion U.S. weight loss market. The magic pill is still not here, and likely won't be here in 2015. Medical weight loss programs are one of the few bright growth segments.”, according to Research Director, John LaRosa.

ABOUT MARKETDATA WEIGHT LOSS MARKET STUDIES

All Marketdata studies are independently researched and are “off-the-shelf” reports. Studies are also sold by single chapters. Following are some titles:

- The U.S. Weight Loss & Diet Control Market (covers ALL mkt. segments)
- The Multi-level Market For Weight Loss Products
- 2014 & 2015 Weight Loss Market Status Reports
- The Worksite Weight Loss Programs Market
- The Diet Food Home Delivery Market
- Weight Loss Websites: The Online Dieting Market.
- Guide: How To Run A Profitable Weight Loss Business

ABOUT MARKETDATA

Marketdata Enterprises, Inc., is an independent market research firm and 26-year analyst of the U.S. weight loss industry since 1989. Marketdata publishes many weight loss market studies covering all diet market segments, performs consulting and custom research projects, has 9 diet market teleseminars on You Tube, teleconferences, and conferences. It also operates a leading free weight loss news website: DietBusinessWatch.com. Mr. LaRosa is available for interviews.

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