



Counsellor Qualifications And Clinical Benefits of Program

Qualifications:

- 20+ Years Counselling In Weight Management
 - Developer / Facilitator First Step Program since 2000
 - Weight Management – WALMAR, Southern Ontario Franchise of Weight Watchers as Regional Manager, Program Developer, Trainer, Leader
 - Specialized Training in Motivational Psychology, Limbic + Relaxation Therapies, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
 - Professional Continuing Education in Obesity / Wellness / Spirituality
- BIA [Bio-Impedance Analysis] Technician. This testing is used to measure body fat, muscle increase as well as other health indices.
- Supervised Postgraduate Counselling Training in a Hospital Setting [CPE]
- Parish Ministry / Hospital Chaplaincy
- Masters of Divinity - Waterloo Lutheran Seminary
Courses taken in conjunction with the School of Social Work - Wilfrid Laurier University
- B.A. - Religion + Culture: Focus on Psychology, Sociology, World Religions, Cultural Values + Beliefs

Clinical Benefits of First Step:

Positive Health Outcomes

- 5% - 10% Body Weight Reduction
a health indicator for decreased risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes.
- Weight Stabilization for those unable to lose
- ↓ Body Fat, ↑ Muscle Mass as evidenced through periodic Body-Impedance Analysis [BIA Testings]
- ↓ Waist Circumference:
Health Target – 32” or less for women. 38” or less for men.
- ↓ BMI [Body Mass Index]:
Health Target – to progress to a lower risk category
- ↓ Blood Pressure, Cholesterol, Glucose Readings, Medications, etc.
- ↓ Depression / Anxiety / Stress
- ↑ Education re. Healthy Living + ↑ Skill Development in Healthy Lifestyle Habits
- Enhanced Quality of Life as reported by participants including:
 - ↑ knowledge + implementation of healthy behaviours
 - ↓ Stress through implementation of techniques / tools learned in First Step

- Improved Sleep
- ↑ Energy
- ↑ Body Image
- ↑ Self-Esteem
- ↑ Emotional Balance
- ↑ Self-Efficacy in all areas of life
- ↑ Appreciation for the Role of Spirituality and Health
- Strengthening Connections Within the Community
- Ripple effect of Healthier Families – Spouses, Children, Grandchildren
- Access to Social Work / Psychotherapy
- Healthier Bodies, Minds, Spirits

Participant Satisfaction

- Health Benefits as listed above
- Support, Accountability, Education as provided through group and individual components of First Step
- Initial in-depth Individual Assessment for goal setting, customized tips and strategies to implement stated health goals and teaching segments on health eating and portion control
- Continued one on one healthy living counselling as needed
- Maintenance Support through “Booster Sessions” and / or regular accountability weigh-ins and re-assessment of goals
- Motivation, Inspiration, Educational components

Wholistic Focus

- First Step addresses the challenge of obesity from a whole person perspective [mind, body, emotions, spirit, values and beliefs] and focuses on healthy lifestyle behaviours in light of listening to one’s body and inner self.
- First Step counsels and customizes healthy living so that participants are better able to make changes that are sustainable.
- Obesity is about more than healthy eating and exercise; it is about the ways in which food is used to cope with various other life issues. Recognizing and dealing with the under lying issues is crucial to promoting sustained changes and discouraging weight cycling and regain.
- First Step offers a combination of both individual and group support.

Multi-Disciplinary Approach

- First Step works in conjunction with Doctors, Nurse Practitioners, Dietitians, Nurse Educator, Social Workers, Mental Health Worker and Certified Fitness Instructors to ensure health goals are met.

- First Step informs and advises of programs offered through the GBACHC and community at large that would help meet participant's health + support goals: Chronic Pain, Healthy Lifestyle Exercise Class, Yoga, etc.
- First Step partners with interested health oriented groups such as the Grand Bend Fitness Centre and Work Out For Your Life.

Innovative and Unique Support Materials

- At the core of implementation of First Step are proven techniques / tools for weight management, increased activity, implementing change, motivational / limbic psychology, and individual and group support. Strong fortes of First Step are its ability to counsel, coach, motivate and inspire.
- A plethora of proprietary support materials including Assessment / Evaluation tools, Journals [Food, Exercise, Emotional / Eating Triggers, Diabetes], etc.

First Step Is In Compliance With:

- The 2004 Healthy Weights / Healthy Lives initiative put forth by Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and Assistant Deputy Minister, Dr. Sheela Basrur under the auspices of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/ministry_reports/cmoh04_report/cmoh_04.html
- The 2005 Healthy Weights / Healthy Lives for Lambton: A Health Status Report For Lambton County – presented by the Community Health Services Department and Healthy Living Lambton.
www.lambtonhealth.on.ca/resources/HWHL/index.asp
- The Canadian Population Health Initiative - Improving the Health of Canadians: Promoting Healthy Weights www.cihi.ca/cphi.
- Health Canada
- World Health Organization [WHO]
- Canadian Medical Association Guidelines for the Treatment of Overweight + Obesity

First Step is a highly respected program with consistently positive outcomes in helping people meet their health goals.