PUBLISHED RESEARCH

Weight, function, and behavior improved together in interdisciplinary inpatient care for Prader-Willi syndrome

Exploratory retrospective cohort of 9 patients ages 10 to 21 with genetically confirmed PWS
Median length of stay 161 days | Journal of Psychiatric Research, 2026



73 lbs
median weight loss, about 1.2% of admission weight per week under continuous medical supervision

0 of 9
patients with documented aggression in the final week *(9 of 9 in the first week)*

+253 ft
median gain in 6-Minute Walk distance

8 of 9
patients remained in the community without rehospitalization at 3 months

Median weight 276 lbs at admission and 191 lbs at discharge (median individual loss 73 lbs)

OUTCOMES AT DISCHARGE

METABOLIC

- BMI fell by a median of 11.9 kg/m^2
- Triglycerides, LDL, total cholesterol, and HbA1c all improved
- Vitamin D levels rose

FUNCTIONAL

- 6-Minute Walk distance increased by a median of 253 feet
- Functional independence (WeeFIM II) improved by a median of 10 points

BEHAVIORAL

- Documented aggression resolved completely: every patient had incidents in the first week, none in the final week
- Token economy engagement rose from 88% to 94%
- Agitation scores decreased in every patient with elevated admission scores

AFTER DISCHARGE (3-MONTH CAREGIVER INTERVIEW)

- **8 of 9** patients remained in the community without rehospitalization
- **7 of 9** caregivers rated overall well-being Good or Excellent (4 Excellent, 3 Good)
- Caregivers of all **9** patients reported weight within 10 lbs of discharge weight

HOW THE MODEL WORKS

Four components work together as routine clinical care: environmental food control with dietitian-guided plans, a token economy that rewards adaptive behavior with non-food reinforcers, structured rehabilitation (physical, occupational, recreational, and speech-language therapy), and coordinated psychiatric management. An interdisciplinary team meets weekly to review medications and dietary targets.

WHY IT MATTERS

Evidence describing integrated inpatient treatment for PWS is limited. This is the first peer-reviewed description of outcomes from the Nexus model, published in a dedicated PWS special issue of the Journal of Psychiatric Research. The simultaneous gains across metabolic, functional, and behavioral measures are consistent with an integrated approach. As an exploratory study of 9 patients without a control group, these results describe what happened in our program and call for larger, controlled study.

View the publication here https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2026.09.012
Full article available upon request.

To discuss these outcomes: nexusresearch@nxhs.com

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