Banfield Pet Hospital recently released its 2017 State of Pet Health Report, highlighting a widespread trend of overweight pets nationwide. This is the largest report of its kind, capturing medical data from more than 2.5 million dogs cared for by Banfield in 2016.

According to this year’s report, 1 in 3 pets that visited a Banfield hospital last year was diagnosed as overweight or obese—and in the past 10 years, Banfield witnessed a 158% increase in overweight dogs.
The top 5 states with the highest prevalence of overweight dogs were Minnesota (41%), Nebraska (39%), Michigan (38%), Idaho (38%), and Nevada (36%). Indiana, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Washington tied for fifth place at 34%. The prevalence estimates for each state are shown in FIGURE 1. How did your state do?

Here are some tips and tricks for talking with your clients about their dog’s weight:

- Prevention is key. Remind owners that regular check-ups and nutritional counseling can help keep their dogs at a healthy weight.
- Show, don’t tell. Educate your clients about body condition scoring, and show them how their pet ranks.
- Give treats in moderation. Advise clients to take note of how many treats they give their dog per day.
  - Treats should not make up more than 10% of a dog’s daily caloric consumption.
  - Clients can offer rewards other than food, such as belly rubs or playing with a favorite toy.
- If food is given as a reward, clients can substitute low-calorie snacks such as baby carrots for high-calorie treats.

For more client education tools, as well as a host of other resources, visit stateofpethealth.com TVN