



Strategies to Overcome and Prevent (STOP) Obesity Alliance 2024-2025 Annual Report

The Strategies to Overcome and Prevent (STOP) Obesity Alliance comprises a diverse group of business, consumer, government, advocacy, and health organizations dedicated to reversing the obesity epidemic in the United States. Drawing on the strengths of the collaborative, the Alliance conducts research, makes policy recommendations, and develops hands-on tools for providers, advocacy groups, policymakers, and consumers.

The goals of the STOP Obesity Alliance are to address obesity and related conditions by:

- Leading innovation
- Strengthening systems of care for patients with overweight and obesity
- Convening diverse stakeholders to address issues related to the care of patients with overweight and obesity
- Defining and catalyzing an innovative research agenda for the care of patients with overweight and obesity
- Identifying, implementing, and evaluating strategies to increase physical activity for patients with obesity
- Reducing stigma to improve health outcomes

Leadership and Staff

The Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University serves as the academic home of the STOP Obesity Alliance. Situated in the only school of public health in our nation's capital, STOP is ideally positioned to convene key stakeholders and determine strategies to translate public health science into effective policy.

The Alliance is directed by William H. Dietz, M.D., Ph.D., Professor, Exercise and Nutritional Sciences. Christine Gallagher, MPAff is the Associate Director for Research and Policy. George Washington University School of Public Health graduate student Aden Belay has provided research support.

Membership

Alliance members include 55 consumer, provider, government, business, health insurance, advocacy, and quality-of-care organizations. Essential to the success of the Alliance is its active and diverse membership. Since its launch in 2007, the Alliance has focused on collaborative member relationships to achieve shared goals and capitalize on partnership opportunities.

The Alliance's Steering Committee is composed of leading public and private sector organizations selected for their expertise in areas related to obesity, chronic disease, and health care. (Please see Appendix A for a list of the Steering Committee members.)

The Alliance's broad membership includes national associations, state-level members, and individuals that contribute to the Alliance's discussions and convenings. Collaborative work focuses on developing clinical strategies and consumer materials that improve obesity care, support effective prevention, and reduce bias and stigma. (Please see Appendix B for a list of the Associate members.)

Funding

In 2024, the Alliance welcomed 2 new corporate members: Altimmune and Amgen. Existing corporate members include Boehringer-Ingelheim, Currax, Eli Lilly, Found, Novo Nordisk, Pfizer, Structure Therapeutics, Wondr Health and Weight Watchers. The Alliance is also supported through voluntary membership fees from its nonprofit members. In 2024, we had fourteen members pay the voluntary membership fee. **In 2024, the combined support from our non-profit and corporate members amounted to \$318,500.**

In 2025, the Alliance welcomed 2 new corporate members: Regeneron and Wave Life Sciences. Three members were unable to continue: Altimmune, Found and Wondr Health. Existing corporate members include Amgen, Boehringer-Ingelheim, Currax, Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk, Pfizer, Structure Therapeutics, and Weight Watchers. The Alliance is also supported through membership fees of its nonprofit members. In 2025, eleven members paid the voluntary membership fee. **In 2025, the combined support from our non-profit and corporate members amounted to \$299,000.** We attribute the decrease from 2024 to 2025 to the loss of corporate members and payments from several nonprofit members.

Membership Engagement

In 2024 and 2025, the Alliance conducted quarterly Membership and Steering Committee meetings. Throughout the year, the Alliance conducted outreach efforts and continued to utilize publications, presentations at scientific meetings and media opportunities to expand its reach. The Alliance sends out a monthly electronic newsletter with member updates, summaries of newsworthy research, expert perspectives on media coverage of obesity-related news, and a "Letter from the Director" that describes research, treatment, policy, and other obesity-related developments. Highlights from the 2024-2025 "Letters from the Director" included topics such as:

- ["The Changing Global Obesity Landscape"](#)
- ["The Role of Physical Activity in Obesity Treatment"](#)
- ["Employer Insurance Coverage of Obesity Treatment"](#)
- ["Lancet Commission Report on Obesity"](#)
- ["Compounding on GLP-1 Drugs"](#)
- ["What are 'Ozempic Babies' and How Does Obesity Impact Women?"](#)
- ["Weight Discrimination in the Workplace"](#)
- ["Understanding Food Noise"](#)



How We're Making a Difference

In 2024 and 2025, the Alliance continued to conduct and publish research to guide health care providers, policymakers, payers, and health care experts towards the effective treatment of obesity.

Obesity Quality Measures

We continued our focus on obesity quality measures and held two successful roundtables with stakeholders that focused on developing a measure for the diagnosis of obesity.

In 2024, we convened a roundtable of clinical and public health experts, patient advocates, professional organizations, and others to answer the question, "What clinical measures are most appropriate for the diagnosis of obesity?" A smaller working group of those roundtable attendees met in late 2024 to finalize the recommendation for a measure for the diagnosis of obesity using BMI plus a measure of body fat distribution.

In June 2025, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Systems (CMS) program, Measures Management System (MMS), invited Dr. Dietz and Dr. Zvenyach from the Obesity Action Coalition to present a public webinar on our quality measurement work. The webinar, "Measuring What Matters: Improving Obesity Management and Outcomes," had over 1,000 attendees.

We convened our last roundtable on measures in September 2025. In partnership with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC), the Alliance once again convened stakeholders to discuss whether we have sufficient evidence to develop quality measures for obesity. Over thirty organizations and experts in the field met to analyze the progress, activities, and projects on obesity quality measures made to date, and discuss existing gaps that need to be filled.

Medicaid Coverage of Obesity Treatments

As part of efforts to improve the treatment and management of obesity, since 2009 the Alliance has conducted research that reviews how state insurance carriers cover obesity treatments and services. In 2017, we conducted a [state-by-state analysis](#) of Medicaid and State Employee Health Plan coverage for obesity prevention and treatment.

In 2024, to achieve a better understanding of the current distribution of Medicaid coverage, the Alliance partnered with the Obesity Action Coalition to analyze the state Medicaid coverage data for plan year 2023. Both the Medicaid Fee for Service and top Medicaid Managed Care plans for each state were analyzed.

The Alliance's [state map of Medicaid coverage of obesity treatments was updated](#) with these new data. This analysis was the first of its kind to describe levels of coverage for obesity treatments. Even when coverage existed in the policy documents, limitations and restrictions likely made treatments difficult to access, effectively resulting in the lack of coverage.



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The new data were selected for a presentation session and poster at The Obesity Society's Obesity Week meeting in November 2024 and a poster at the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery's June 2025 meeting.

Changes to the ICD-10 codes for adult and pediatric obesity

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) provide guidelines for coding and reporting for health care using the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-10-CM). ICD-10-CM diagnosis codes are used to classify and diagnose disease processes, assess disease management, billing, and health services research.

The ICD-10-CM diagnosis codes for childhood and adult obesity had lacked the specificity needed for categorizing elevated BMI in children, adolescents and adults. Furthermore, the current codes were stigmatizing and reflect outdated scientific understanding of the disease processes underlying obesity.

The Alliance, in partnership with Dr. Donna Ryan and the Centers for Disease Control's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO), proposed new ICD-10-CM codes for both the pediatric and adult diagnosis of obesity. In September 2023, the [National Center for Health Statistics \(NCHS\) approved updated ICD-10-CM obesity codes and they went into effect on October 1, 2024](#).

The Alliance led a symposium event at The Obesity Society's Obesity Week meeting in November 2024 to roll out the [new ICD-10 obesity codes](#) for adult and pediatric obesity.

Comprehensive Obesity Benefit

As a first step toward standardizing the availability of obesity care across plans, the Alliance designed a [comprehensive obesity benefit](#) (COB) in 2019 that provided guidance on the core components of obesity care and the conditions under which these ought to be covered.

In 2024-2025, the Alliance shared the COB at several targeted outreach activities, including the:

- American Medical Women's Association's "Women's Health Obesity Summit"
- Financial Times' "Strategies to Address Obesity in America's Workplace"
- National Conference of Insurance Legislators' panel on obesity medications
- DHNY's "Obesity and Health Conference"
- GOPAC's Ideas and Innovators Summit
- Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference in Occupational and Environmental Medicine
- National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators' "Transforming Obesity Care: Innovative Solutions for States"
- At SXSW The Economist's "Losing the stigma: addressing obesity through empathy and healing"



Obesity Care Week

The Obesity Care Week (OCW) campaign has made significant progress since its inception in 2015, when the Alliance joined as a founding member with the Obesity Action Coalition, the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery, the Obesity Medicine Association, and The Obesity Society. OCW falls the first week of March, with World Obesity Day falling annually on March 4th.

2024 highlights included:

- 7 partners, including 5 STOP corporate members
- 144 champion organizations, including 25 STOP members
- OCW 2024 focused on raising awareness of the "[5 Principles of Obesity](#)"
- Over 1,000 pledges to "Change the way we think and care about obesity"
- Over 37 million social media reach
- 46% increase in traffic to obesitycareweek.org over 2023

2025 highlights included:

- 10 partners, including 5 STOP corporate members
- 164 champion organizations, including 27 STOP members
- 1,047 pledges to "Commit to Care"
- Over 37 million social media reach
- 500% increase in traffic to obesitycareweek.org over 2024

STOP Obesity Alliance Resources

Weight Can't Wait Guide

The "Weight Can't Wait guide for the management of obesity in the primary care setting" (WCW), was developed with a research grant in 2020. Eleven of the twelve organizations that participated in the process to develop the guide endorsed the WCW guide. The guide and the process for its development were published in *Obesity* in April 2021 in an article entitled "Weight Can't Wait: A Guide to Discussing Obesity and Organizing Treatment in the Primary Care Setting."

Why Weight Guide

To address the persistent issue of providers' lack of training on the etiology, treatment, and prevention of obesity, the Alliance developed a provider discussion tool in 2014 designed to promote more effective conversations about weight and health with patients. *Why Weight? A Guide to Discussing Obesity & Health with Your Patients*, focuses on skills for building a safe and trusting environment with patients and facilitating open, productive conversations about weight. It also provides potential scenarios that providers may face and suggests ways to navigate the conversations.

The Why Weight guide is available on the Alliance website. It includes a list of resources and a series of educational videos that feature "what not to do" dramatizations for health care providers and what they should do when addressing a patient's weight.



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Weigh In Guide

Parents often report that discussing weight with children can be uniquely challenging for numerous reasons. To address this need, we developed the *Weigh In Guide* in 2012 to enable productive conversations about weight and health between parents or caregivers and children ages 7 to 11. The guide provides factual, practical, and sensitive approaches to the many different emotions evoked by discussions about weight. The *Weigh In Guide* remains one of our most requested publications. The Alliance continues to promote it online and on social media.

State Employee Health Plan coverage

In 2021, data on the State Employee Health Plan (SEHP) coverage of obesity benefits were updated for the 2020/2021 plan year. Alliance staff conducted a state-by-state analysis of SEHP coverage for obesity prevention and treatment, including preventive services and counseling, nutrition counseling, drug therapy, and bariatric surgery.

This research was published in *Obesity* in August 2022, in an article entitled "[Coverage for obesity prevention and treatment: analysis of state employee health plans and use of benefits](#)." An interactive map with the results of the research is available on the Alliance website.

Fast Fact Sheets

All of our fact sheets continue to be widely shared on social media and we encourage others to share them in provider's offices and wellness centers to help educate about obesity. The fact sheets are freely available at go.gwu.edu/obesityfacts.



Appendix A:

Members of the STOP Obesity Alliance

The **Steering Committee** is comprised of a diverse group of leading public and private sector organizations. Each was selected for its expertise in areas related to obesity, chronic disease and health care.

America's Health Insurance Plans
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Medical Group Association
American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery
Business Group on Health
Gary Foster, PhD
Obesity Action Coalition
Donna Ryan, M.D.
The Obesity Society
Trust for America's Health



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Appendix B:

Associate Members contribute to substantive discussions related to obesity treatment and prevention through inclusion in Alliance projects, participation in public events, and internal communications.

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics	Jennifer Sacheck, Ph.D.
Allison Sylvestky, PhD	Karina R. Lora, Ph.D., R.D.
American Academy of Physician Associates	Lisa W. Martin, MD, FACC
American Association of Clinical Endocrinology	Melissa A. Napolitano, Ph.D.
Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists	Michael Long, Ph.D.
American Association of Nurse Practitioners	Michele Ver Ploeg, PhD
American College of Preventive Medicine	National Alliance on Health Care
American College of Sports Medicine	Purchaser Coalitions
American Council on Exercise	National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
American Medical Women's Association	National Association of Social Workers
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy	National Hispanic Medical Association
American Society for Nutrition	Obesity Canada
CDC: Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity	Obesity Medicine Association
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service	OCEANS
COPE - The MacDonald Center for Obesity Prevention and Education	OsteoArthritis Action Alliance
Endocrine Society	Pennington Biomedical Research Center
Global Liver Institute	Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
Healthcare Leadership Council	Primary Care Metabolic Group
HealthyWomen	Raymond A. Wood Foundation
Institute for Health and Productivity Management	Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity
International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association	Stephen R. Cook, MD, MPH
	Society of Behavioral Medicine
	The Gerontological Society of America
	The Ohio State University
	UnidosUS
	Uriyoan Colon-Ramos, Ph.D.
	World Obesity Federation

