

## The Obesity Association Publishes the Standards of Care in Overweight and Obesity

*First of its kind clinical guidance on reducing weight stigma in obesity care*

**ARLINGTON, Va. (May 13, 2025)** – Today, the Obesity Association™, a division of the American Diabetes Association®, (Obesity Association) announced the publication of “[Weight Stigma and Bias: Standards of Care in Overweight and Obesity—2025](#),” along with the “[Introduction & Methodology](#)” section in *BMJ Open Diabetes Research & Care*. The publication extends the ADA’s process and expertise in developing trusted, evidence-based guidelines to obesity care, offering comprehensive standards to reduce weight stigma and improve care for people living with overweight and obesity.

The recommendations, which make up the first of several chapters to be published as part of the *Standards of Care in Overweight and Obesity*, address the pervasive stigma individuals with obesity face, which undermines health care access, quality, and outcomes.

Developed by the Obesity Association’s Professional Practice Committee, with input and support from multiple obesity and medical organizations, the *Standards of Care in Overweight and Obesity* will offer a groundbreaking roadmap to empower health care professionals with the tools necessary to deliver the best possible evidence-based, pragmatic care to people with overweight and obesity.

“Bias and stigma have long been barriers to effective obesity care,” said Dr. Raveendhara R. Bannuru, chief methodologist and representative of the ADA’s Professional Practice Committee. “These guidelines are about improving care—and about changing the culture of medicine to uphold dignity and compassion for every individual, regardless of body size.”

### Key recommendations include:

- **Training:** All health care professionals and staff should receive ongoing education on weight bias and stigma beginning in early training and continuing throughout their careers.
- **Inclusive clinical environments:** Clinics should be equipped with appropriate furniture, equipment, and private accommodations that support people of all sizes.
- **Person-centered communication:** Health care professionals are urged to use respectful, non-judgmental language and to ask permission before discussing weight-related issues.
- **Shared decision-making:** Health care professionals are encouraged to align care goals with a patient’s values, recognizing health outcomes beyond just weight loss.

- **Evidence-based interventions:** The guidelines support multicomponent strategies, such as role-play, self-reflection, and patient engagement, to reduce implicit and explicit bias effectively.

"Individuals with obesity should feel comfortable in health care settings," said Dr. Nuha ElSayed, the ADA's senior vice president of health care improvement. "This guidance represents a call to action to eliminate the stigmatizing practices that still persist across health care systems."

The recommendations align with the broader work of the Obesity Association to change the conversation on obesity care, recognizing obesity as the complex disease it is and working to support both people with obesity and professionals to improve health outcomes. The guidelines reflect rigorous evidence review, and expert consensus—backed by the ADA's unwavering commitment to advocacy, innovation, and patient dignity.

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## About the Obesity Association

Obesity is an epidemic that demands both attention and action. The Obesity Association, a division of the American Diabetes Association, is dedicated to reducing the prevalence of obesity and improving health outcomes. Through a focus on education, action, and evidence-based support, we strive to create a world where people affected by obesity can thrive.

## About the American Diabetes Association

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is the nation's leading voluntary health organization fighting to end diabetes and helping people thrive. This year, the ADA celebrates 85 years of driving discovery and research to prevent, manage, treat, and ultimately cure—and we're not stopping. There are 136 million Americans living with diabetes or prediabetes. Through advocacy, program development, and education, we're fighting for them all. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at [diabetes.org](https://diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383). Join us in the fight on Facebook ([American Diabetes Association](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanDiabetesAssociation)), Spanish Facebook ([Asociación Americana de la Diabetes](https://www.facebook.com/AsociaciónAmericanaDeLaDiabetes)), LinkedIn ([American Diabetes Association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/AmericanDiabetesAssociation)), and Instagram ([@AmDiabetesAssn](https://www.instagram.com/AmDiabetesAssn)). To learn more about how we are advocating for everyone affected by diabetes, visit us on X ([@AmDiabetesAssn](https://twitter.com/AmDiabetesAssn)).