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The American Diabetes Association and Partners Celebrate TennCare's Decision to Cover FDA-Approved Weight-Management Medications

Nashville, TN (August 4, 2025) – The American Diabetes Association® (ADA) applauds TennCare's decision to provide coverage for Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved weight-management medications. TennCare's coverage of obesity medications, including glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists, will give more people access to this life-changing treatment option. Approximately 38% of the adult population in Tennessee live with obesity and could benefit from access to this patient-centered treatment.

"GLP-1 medications offer the rare opportunity to better manage chronic conditions, improve health, reduce medical costs, and drive productivity," said Gary Dougherty, the ADA's senior director of state government affairs.

Obesity is a chronic disease that affects the livelihood of many Tennesseans. Obesity is linked to 200 medical conditions, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, liver disorders, and other largely preventable illnesses. GLP-1 medications have the potential to transform the way we treat obesity and prevent these other diseases from affecting vulnerable populations.

TennCare's coverage of weight-management medications will help many of the over 2.6 million people in Tennessee who live with obesity and could protect the state from incurring future medical costs associated with treating other chronic health illnesses linked to obesity. Ultimately, by investing in these treatments, TennCare will help save people from the myriad of health complications associated with obesity.

ADA coalition partners, consisting of Tennessee health care professionals, patients, and stakeholder organizations, have also shared their gratitude for expanded TennCare coverage of obesity medications.

"Adding coverage for FDA-approved medications for weight management is good public policy, good fiscal policy, and is a commonsense approach to health care," noted Dr. Gitanjali Srivastava, professor of medicine, pediatrics and surgery, at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

"My ability to live a healthy and dignified life is worth the investment," said Cindy Strike, a Knoxville, TN, resident who struggles with obesity. "TennCare's decision to add coverage for FDA-approved medications for weight loss will truly be transformational for me and so many other Tennesseans who are struggling with their weight."



News Release

TennCare's decision to provide coverage for obesity medications is a critical step forward to address the obesity epidemic in Tennessee.

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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 or call 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383). Join us in the fight on Facebook ([American Diabetes Association](#)), Spanish Facebook ([Asociación Americana de la Diabetes](#)), LinkedIn ([American Diabetes Association](#)), and Instagram ([@AmDiabetesAssn](#)). To learn more about how we are advocating for everyone affected by diabetes, visit us on X ([@AmDiabetesAssn](#)).