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## **The American Diabetes Association Applauds Announcement of New Weight Management Program for State Employees in Ohio**

*A step forward, but more progress needs to be made*

**September 24, 2025 (Columbus, OH)** – The American Diabetes Association® (ADA) applauds Monday's announcement that, effective October 7, 2025, Ohio will launch a new weight management program for state employees. The program will include partial reimbursement for Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved GLP-1 medications for state employees who meet medical eligibility criteria.

The program, limited to the first 2,500 qualified employees who enroll, includes unlimited support from an expert health coach, nutrition resources, a digital body weight scale, and limited access to GLP-1 medications. Qualifying members who have been prescribed GLP-1 medications through Virta, the contractor administering the program, will receive the medications at a reduced cost of \$299 per month after a \$200 reimbursement is applied.

This decision comes on the heels of the ADA's outreach to the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and thousands of letters generated by ADA Diabetes Advocates to their legislators, Governor Mike DeWine and DAS Director Kathleen Madden. The letters urged the department to maintain coverage of weight management treatments, including access to FDA-approved GLP-1 obesity medications prior to eliminating all coverage as of July 1.

"Whereas we would prefer the state to fully restore coverage for a weight management program including GLP-1s, we appreciate this positive step forward," said Gary Dougherty, the ADA's senior director of state government affairs. "We will continue to advocate for full access to the medications and other evidence-based interventions that have a proven track record of helping people manage their weight and reduce their risk for type 2 diabetes and other costly health complications such as heart disease."

Notwithstanding Monday's announcement, the ADA continues to support Ohio [House Bill 388](#), an innovative proposal to allow state employees and state elected officials to be prescribed GLP-1 medications for obesity treatment by their health care professional and be eligible for partial reimbursement.

Obesity is a chronic disease that affects the livelihood of many Ohioans. Approximately 3.4 million adults in Ohio, or 36% of the adult population, have obesity. Obesity is also 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.

“We are already paying for obesity in Ohio in the form of higher medical costs related to avoidable emergency and in-patient care as well as preventable type 2 diabetes and other costly comorbid conditions,” said Dougherty. “The state’s decision is a positive first step toward making an investment in the health care of their employees that will lead to improved long-term health.”

Dougherty also cited a recent [study](#) examining cost-effectiveness of treatment over two years which shows GLP-1 medications offer a new opportunity to improve workforce health, particularly with better health and slower cost growth. “The study’s findings demonstrate that GLP-1 medications offer the rare opportunity to better manage chronic conditions, improve health, reduce medical costs, and drive workforce productivity,” noted Dougherty.

ADA coalition partners, consisting of Ohio health care professionals, patients, and stakeholder organizations, have been persistent in efforts to not only advocate for access to weight management services including the reinstatement of GLP-1 medication coverage for state employees, but also to encourage Governor DeWine and the Ohio Department of Medicaid to remove the prohibition against coverage for obesity medications for Medicaid enrollees.

GLP-1 medications have proven outcomes that have helped many people battle obesity and its associated health challenges. Access to these medications is a critical step forward in the effort to address the obesity epidemic in Ohio and to prevent type 2 diabetes and other serious health issues.

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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](https://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](#)).