



American Medical Women's Association
The Vision and Voice of Women in Medicine since 1915

June 14, 2023

USPSTF Coordinator
c/o USPSTF
5600 Fishers Lane
Mail Stop 06E53A
Rockville, MD 20857

Re: USPSTF Draft Research Plan: Weight Loss to Prevent Obesity-Related Morbidity and Mortality in Adults: Interventions

Dear U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the USPSTF Draft Research Plan: Weight Loss Interventions to Prevent Morbidity and Mortality. We appreciate the work of the Task Force and delighted to see that obesity care is being addressed at this critical juncture. Obesity is now known to be no longer a lifestyle issue, but a chronic disease expected to impact close to half of the U.S. population by 2030. It is also a leading cause of preventable deaths.

The American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) has been working to educate practitioners and trainees on the management of obesity as a chronic disease, addressing obesity stigma, and the impact of obesity in women.

Weight gain and obesity are associated with numerous medical conditions, including Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, sleep apnea, cancer, hypertension, depression, osteoarthritis, and more. In addition, there are specific considerations in women and increased challenges in pregnancy and fertility care as a result of obesity. Therefore, it will be important that the studies reviewed include a representative population in terms of sex, as well as race and ethnicity.

Although overall rates of obesity are comparable between men and women, more women have severe obesity. And when the data are broken down by race and ethnicity, the rate of obesity is found to be exceptionally high among non-Hispanic Black women (56.9%).

Fortunately, our understanding of obesity has advanced tremendously over the past few decades. Once thought of as a lifestyle disorder, we now know that obesity is a multifactorial disease, where genetics, development over the life course, the environment, psychological factors, and behavior all influence a person's likelihood of developing obesity. Regulation of food intake involves complex pathways with various hormones and enzymes, which, along with environmental and psychological factors, determine appetite, satiety, activity level, metabolism, fat storage, and neuropeptide regulation. So, while lifestyle factors can make a significant impact, addressing obesity is not just about diet and exercise. There is a need for a multi-pronged, clinical approach to obesity that may

American Medical Women's Association

Two Woodfield Lake • 1100 E Woodfield Road, Suite 350 • Schaumburg, IL 60173 • Telephone (847) 517-2801 •
Fax: (847) 517-7229 • www.amwa-doc.org



American Medical Women's Association
The Vision and Voice of Women in Medicine since 1915

include counseling, pharmacotherapy, and surgical procedures, in addition to behavioral modification. And indeed, new advances in therapeutics are changing the landscape of obesity care. We are encouraged that the USPSTF will be addressing weight loss interventions to prevent obesity-related morbidity and mortality in adults. We look forward to the upcoming final version of your research plan. Thank you for the opportunity to provide commentary on this draft research plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Connie Newman, M.D." in a cursive style.

Connie Newman, MD, MACP, FAMWA
Adjunct Professor of Medicine, New York University School of Medicine
Obesity Committee Chair and Past President, , American Medical Women's Association

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fatima Cody Stanford" in a cursive style.

Fatima Cody Stanford, MD, MPH, MPA, MBA, FAAP, FACP, FAHA, FAMWA, FTOS
Associate Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School
Director of Equity, Endocrine Division, Massachusetts General Hospital
Director of Diversity, Nutrition Obesity Research Center at Harvard
Director of External Consultative Care, MGH Weight Center
Core Faculty, Mongan Institute of Health Policy, and Disparities Solution Center
Midlife Women's Health Center, Leadership Team
Obesity Advocacy Lead, American Medical Women's Association

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eliza Lo Chin" in a cursive style.

Eliza Lo Chin, MD, MPH, MACP, FAMWA
Executive Director, American Medical Women's Association