

# Weight Management

## in Community Health: Bridging Systems & Care Coordination



### RAPID RECAP/KEY TAKEAWAYS

#### Learning Objectives

- Describe the impact of weight stigma on health-related outcomes for patients
- Explain the core components of successful primary care models for managing patients with overweight/obesity
- Implement strategies to improve the holistic care of patients with overweight/obesity

#### Impact of Weight Stigma<sup>1-3</sup>

- Weight stigma creates disparities in health care
- Patient is often prescribed weight loss instead of offered researched-based treatments, e.g., for knee pain, hernia, hypertension
- Patients delay coming to appointments due to pain or stigma and wait until there are medical complications
  - Turned away for services (weight loss is required for treatment)
  - Patients are shamed, lectured, etc.
  - Providers are not prepared to care for patient in larger bodies

When people with obesity internalize weight stigma, they apply harmful weight-related stereotypes to themselves.



The **most-cited reason** that those with obesity gave for not seeking medical help was perceived personal responsibility for their weight.



82% of people with obesity surveyed believed they alone were responsible for weight loss.

82%

Over half of participants who identified as “struggling with their weight” were found to have high levels of internalized weight bias.



52%

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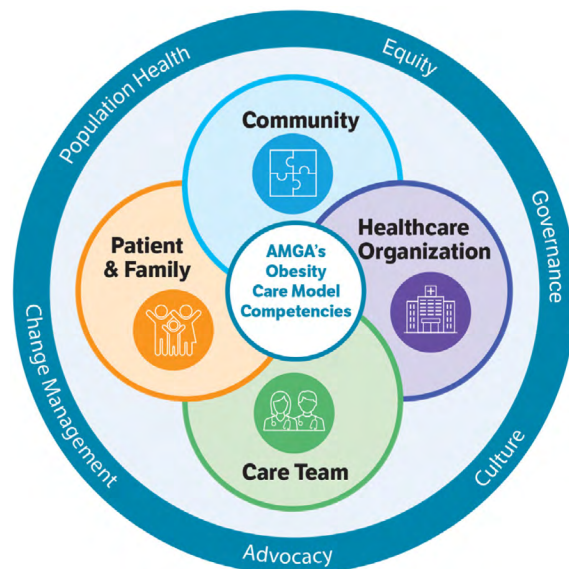
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#### Successful Models for Primary Care<sup>4</sup>

- **Community** focuses on engaging and building relationships with patients and organizations
- **Organization** focuses on administrative, financial, and clinical initiatives in a medical institution
- **Care team** focuses on health system's care teams implementing initiatives that directly impact patient care
- **Patient/family** focuses on creating partnerships between clinician, patients, and their families



#### Strategies to Engage Patients<sup>5-11</sup>

Strategies to Improve Communication	Health Literacy Strategies	Strategies to Address SDOH	Strategies to Improve Patient Trust
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telehealth</li> <li>• Translation services</li> <li>• Incorporating caregivers into communications</li> <li>• Offering training on how to improve interpersonal communication (avoiding medical jargon, slowing down, assuring understanding, asking the right questions, etc.)</li> <li>• Emphasizing nonverbal communication and body language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condition-specific educational videos</li> <li>• Teach-back quizzes</li> <li>• Providing education in patients' preferred formats</li> <li>• Sharing appointment notes</li> <li>• Encouraging patients to ask questions</li> <li>• Including family members and caregivers</li> <li>• Helping the patient understand symptoms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage SDOH screening tools</li> <li>• Recommend affordable food options</li> <li>• Connect patients with food and affordable housing options through partnerships</li> <li>• Offer medical transportation</li> <li>• Provide alternatives to in person care with telehealth</li> <li>• Combat social isolation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing on empathy</li> <li>• Creating a non-judgmental environment</li> <li>• Avoiding stigmatized language as a strategy to motivate change</li> <li>• Offering culturally responsive patient care</li> <li>• Being transparent about treatment and prognosis</li> <li>• Educating staff to be aware of bias</li> </ul>

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### Key Takeaways

- Stigma leads to reduced engagement in health care, leading to undertreatment and management of patients with obesity/overweight
- Successful models for primary care include participation from the community, healthcare organization, care team, and patients/family
- Strategies to improve patient engagement focus on improving communication, health literacy, patient trust, and addressing SDOH

### References and Resources:

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