

# Addressing Barriers to a Full Range of Evidence-Based Obesity Care for Older Adults<sup>1</sup>

**John A. Batsis, MD, FACP, FTOS, AGSF, FGSA**

Associate Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Jason Lofton, MD**

Lofton Family Clinic

**Anna Pendrey, MD**

Assistant Professor of Clinical Family Medicine  
Indiana University School of Medicine

**Kathryn N. Porter Starr, PhD, RD**

Associate Professor of Medicine, Duke University School of Medicine  
Research Health Scientist, Durham VA Health Care System

**Jennifer L. Pettis, MS, RN, CNE**

Director of Strategic Alliances  
Gerontological Society of America

**Karen K. Tracy**

Vice President of Strategic Alliances  
Gerontological Society of America

## Introduction

- Obesity is identified as a chronic disease by the American Medical Association.<sup>2</sup>
- Several professional societies have established clinical guidelines on caring for individuals with obesity and overweight.<sup>3</sup>
- There is a lack of appropriate and individualized treatment strategies for older adults with obesity.
- In June 2023, GSA convened 15 multidisciplinary leaders in a roundtable discussion on addressing barriers to accessing a full range of evidence-based obesity care options by older adults.
- The roundtable of experts identified strategies to address the many barriers that older adults with obesity face when seeking appropriate and effective care.

# Strategies to Address Barriers to Quality Obesity Care for Older Adults

Inform and educate about obesity as a chronic disease requiring care across the life span.

1

Address weight bias and stigma among health providers and the public.

2

Use person-first language when referring to someone who has obesity.

3

Respect and honor cultural considerations about body size.

4

Engineer environments of care to accommodate people of all body sizes.

5

Ensure access to the full range of care for older adults with obesity: diet, exercise, behavioral modification, and medical and surgical interventions.

6

Incorporate an interprofessional, evidence-based approach to caring for older adults who have obesity.

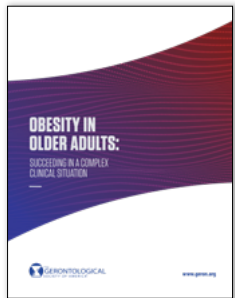
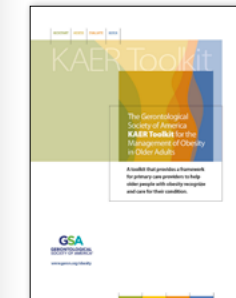
7

## Bring obesity management to the forefront of care for older adults.



## GSA Obesity Resources

- The GSA KAER Toolkit for the Management of Obesity in Older Adults
- Insights & Implications in Gerontology: The Chronic Disease of Obesity
- Obesity in Older Adults: Succeeding in a Complex Clinical Situation
- Momentum Discussions Podcast episodes



GSA  
**Momentum**  
DISCUSSIONS

## References

1. Innovation in Aging, Volume 7, Issue Supplement\_1, December 2023, Page 984. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igad104.3162>
2. American Medical Association. Recognition of Obesity as a Disease H-440.842. 2013.
3. Jensen MD, Ryan DH, Apovian CM, et al. 2013 AHA/ACC/TOS Guideline for the management of overweight and obesity in adults: A report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Task Force on Practice Guidelines and The Obesity Society. *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*. 2020; 63(25):2985–3023. doi: 10.1016/j.jacc.2013.11.004

## Financial Disclosure

Support provided by  
Novo Nordisk.

