



January 7, 2025

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

On behalf of the Society for Women's Health Research (SWHR), a more than 30-year-old national nonprofit dedicated to advancing women's health and promoting research on sex differences to optimize women's health, we want to thank you for your commitment to expanding access to anti-obesity medications (AOMs) under Medicare Part D. This proposed rule demonstrates a significant step toward ensuring that all individuals have access to the care they need to lead healthy lives.

As an organization committed to promoting women's health, we have been concerned about CMS's interpretation of Medicare Part D statutory language, which considers AOMs as weight-loss agents and excludes them from coverage under Part D. Despite obesity being recognized as a complex, chronic disease that may lead to serious health issues, such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and high blood pressure, the lack of access to AOMs under current Medicare Part D language severely limits the options available to those seeking treatment for obesity.

Expanding access to AOMs through this policy would support women throughout the country. Although adult men and women experience similar rates of obesity in the United States, the condition disparately impacts women in several ways. For example, women are more likely to face weight-related stigma, which can affect their mental and physical health as well as their economic status (e.g., lower pay, fewer promotions), and they are at higher risk for obesity-related complications, such as heart disease and diabetes. Furthermore, given the disproportionate impacts of obesity on women of color, the existing Medicare policy is a barrier for achieving health equity.

Effective treatment for obesity requires a comprehensive approach that may include dietary changes, physical activity, mental health support, pharmacotherapy, and, in some cases, surgery. Restricting access to AOMs, which have been proven to support long-term weight management and reduce obesity-related health risks, exacerbates disparities and stands in stark contrast to the growing body of scientific evidence that supports AOMs as a key part of obesity management. All patients with obesity deserve access to the full range of treatment options available to them.

We appreciate the Administration's continued commitment to addressing health disparities – particularly for women – and taking this step to make meaningful improvements to Medicare policy. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

If you have questions about any of the information included above, or if SWHR can be helpful in any way, please contact me ([kathryn@swhr.org](mailto:kathryn@swhr.org)) or SWHR's Chief Advocacy Officer Lindsey Miltenberger at [lindsey@swhr.org](mailto:lindsey@swhr.org).

Sincerely,

*Kathryn A. Schubert*

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President and CEO  
Society for Women's Health Research