

From: [Gina Dennik-Champion](#)
To: [ETF SMB Board Feedback](#)
Subject: WNA Request
Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 10:21:27 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[WNA Letter to WGIB on Coverage for AOMs.pdf](#)

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Good morning, attached is a letter from the Wisconsin Nurses Association regarding increase coverage for treatment of obesity.

I thank you in advance for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Gina

Gina Dennik-Champion

Executive Director

6200 Gisholt Drive, Suite 104

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WNA - Working for the 90,000 RNs in Wisconsin



April 21, 2023

Dear Members of the Group Insurance Board,

On behalf of Wisconsin's Nurses Association, we want to express our support for the Group Insurance Board (GIB) to approve coverage for anti-obesity medications (AOMs) in plan year 2024 for state employees.

Advocates have been working closely with both the Wisconsin Employee Trust Fund (ETF) staff and GIB members about the complex and chronic nature of obesity and how steps must be taken to both prevent worsening severity and treat this chronic disease. We applaud ETF for its decision to provide coverage for bariatric surgery and accompanying intensive behavioral therapy services beginning in 2020. Your acknowledgement of the importance of these services cannot be understated. WNA would like to see GIB provide coverage of anti-obesity medications that have been found to be scientifically effective in addressing and reducing obesity and the impact on vital organs. Coverage for the class of FDA-approved medications for state employees' important part of a comprehensive treatment plan and follows evidence-based clinical guidelines.

WNA members are finding and seeing value in the use of AOM to address obesity in their patients. The opportunity to manage obesity through the use of AOMs supports a comprehensive and patient-centered team approach to care. WNA believes that this will support improved health outcomes, life expectancy, quality of life, and the ability to remain in the workforce longer. This rationale also applies to all nurses working for state institutions and programs here in Wisconsin. We need to ensure our nurses have access to the best medical treatments and care available.

Currently, 25 states have taken steps to expand access to care by providing coverage for AOMs for their state employees, including our neighbors Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, and Michigan. National data shows that utilization of AOMs is below 1% for patients with obesity. Further, Wisconsin Medicaid appropriately provides coverage for AOMs. Wisconsin Medicaid has provided AOM access to patients through a prior authorization process for more than 4 years, prescribing of AOM therapy also remains below the national average (<1%). Low utilization of AOMs and the cost of treatment associated with covering the AOM class is manageable. Obesity should be treated seriously like other chronic diseases.

In closing, it is critical that the Board vote in favor of providing coverage for AOMs to ensure that state employees have access to comprehensive evidence-based treatment options.

WNA thanks you in advance for your consideration of our request. Please contact me at 608-228-3300 with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gina Dennik-Champion".

Gina Dennik-Champion, MSN, RN, MSHA
Executive Director, Wisconsin Nurses Association