

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [ETF SMB Board Feedback](#)  
**Subject:** Adding anti-obesity medications to the State of Wisconsin Group Health Insurance Program"  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 16, 2023 9:49:22 PM  
**Attachments:** [REDACTED]

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Dear Sir/Madam,  
Please see the attached letter supporting adding crucial anti-obesity medicines to the WI group health insurance program.  
Sincerely,  
Dr. Michelle Poliak-Tunis

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Michelle Poliak-Tunis, MD  
UW Health  
[REDACTED]

DATE: 5/16/2023

TO: The Group Insurance Board (GIB) [ETFSMBBoardFeedback@etf.wi.gov](mailto:ETFSMBBoardFeedback@etf.wi.gov)

FROM: Michelle Poliak-Tunis, MD, UW Health

RE: Adding anti-obesity medications to the State of Wisconsin Group Health Insurance Program

Hello,

As an academic physician at UW Health, I am writing to you regarding the consideration for anti-obesity medications (AOMs) to be added to the State of Wisconsin Group Health Insurance Program so public employees have equitable access to the care we need. As part of a chronic weight loss or management program, these medicines have proved to increase an individual's weight loss over time and also allowed individuals to decrease or even cease the use of other medications they have to use to combat the side-effects of chronic obesity. Adding AOMs to the health insurance program for public employees can lead to numerous benefits, such as improved health outcomes, better quality of life for members and increased productivity. Providing access to AOMs under the state's health insurance plan provides members with another option when considering the best decision to make for our health.

As a PM&R physician I see patients with chronic pain and many are overweight and obese. Unfortunately their weight and obesity affects their rehabilitation goals and quality of life. These AOMs represent an important tool in helping my patients improve their function and quality of life.

Providing members with access to AOMs in our health insurance plans would contribute to better weight management, which also leads to improved health outcomes and a lower risk of developing chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer. Further, obesity has a significant impact on an individual's quality of life, such as decreased mobility, lower self-esteem and depression. By including AOMs in the state insurance health plan helps folks more easily manage their weight and improve their overall quality of life, while reducing the risk of related, serious health issues.

Allowing these medications with prior authorization to be covered by etf medical insurance plans not only offers an affordable, convenient option for individuals needing to lose weight and manage their chronic disease, but also would show members that the State of Wisconsin benefit plans meet their employees needs. All our neighboring states (Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan) offer anti-obesity medication as a benefit to their public employees. The Wisconsin Medicaid program offers anti-obesity medication as a benefit to their recipients. I am asking the GIB to add AOMs to the State of Wisconsin Group Health Insurance Program as well. Thank you for your consideration on this matter and allowing me to advocate as an employee on this issue.

Sincerely,

Michelle Poliak-Tunis, MD