



1ST AWSIM ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC & MEMBER ASSEMBLY

EVIDENCE, EDUCATION, AND THE FUTURE OF WEIGHT- INCLUSIVE CARE

Friday, May 8, 2026

Earn up to 5.75 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™

ASSOCIATION FOR WEIGHT AND SIZE INCLUSIVE MEDICINE

Program at a Glance

Welcome & Orientation	10:00 – 10:30 am EST
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Keynote	10:30 – 11:40 am EST
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Scientific Session 1	11:40 – 12:50 pm EST
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Scientific Session 2	12:50 – 2:00 pm EST
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Poster Session	2:00 – 3:00 pm EST
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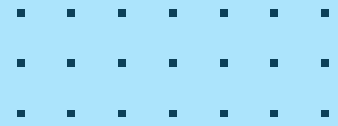
Scientific Session 3	3:00 – 4:10 pm EST
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Keynote	4:10 – 5:10 pm EST
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Clinical Reflection	5:10 – 5:30 pm EST
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Governance & Leadership Meeting	5:30 – 7:00 pm EST
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A Message from the President



Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the 1st AWSIM Annual Scientific & Member Assembly.

This gathering marks an important milestone for our organization. What began as a shared commitment to advancing weight-inclusive care has grown into a global community of clinicians, researchers, and advocates working together to transform healthcare.

Today is not only about learning—it is about recognizing the urgency of this work. Weight stigma continues to shape patient experiences, clinical decisions, and access to care. Creating spaces like this one, where evidence, critical dialogue, and interdisciplinary perspectives come together, is essential to moving the field forward.

It is also about connection. Many of us have been doing this work in isolation—within systems that do not yet reflect the care we know is possible. This Assembly is an opportunity to come together, to exchange ideas, and to build meaningful, lasting connections with others who share this commitment.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who made this meeting possible: our speakers, presenters, and participants. We extend special thanks to our members—particularly those who have renewed their commitment this year—and to our founding members, whose vision and dedication helped build the foundation of AWSIM.



This moment represents both progress and responsibility. As we look ahead, we are committed to expanding our educational programs, strengthening our community, and continuing to challenge weight-centric paradigms in healthcare.

Thank you for being part of this work—and part of this community.

Warmly,
Dr. Lisa Erlanger
President, AWSIM

Why This Meeting Matters

Emerging evidence shows that weight bias and weight-centered approaches in healthcare negatively impact patient outcomes, clinical decision-making, and access to care. Patients in larger bodies frequently experience delayed diagnoses, reduced preventive care, and avoidance of healthcare settings due to stigmatizing encounters.



At the same time, many clinicians report limited training in addressing weight stigma and implementing weight-inclusive care in practice—often navigating this work in isolation.

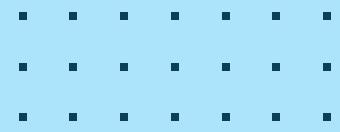
This meeting brings together research, clinical expertise, and interdisciplinary perspectives to explore evidence-informed approaches that support patient health, safety, and engagement across body sizes. It also creates space for connection—offering opportunities to engage with colleagues, exchange ideas, and build a community of clinicians committed to advancing weight-inclusive care together.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Analyze how weight bias influences clinical decision-making and patient outcomes
- Evaluate evidence on weight-centric vs. weight-inclusive approaches
- Apply weight-inclusive strategies in clinical care
- Use communication approaches that reduce stigma and support patient autonomy
- Identify opportunities for advocacy and systems-level change

Keynote



Title

Beyond Weight Inclusion: Joining the Fight Against Obesity Elimination

Speaker

Dr. Rachel Fox, MS, MA, PhD

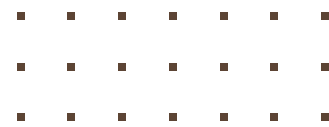
For decades, medicine and public health have worked to eliminate obesity – to produce a world without fat people.

Activists and experts have criticized the project of obesity elimination on largely technical grounds: inaccurate research, ineffective interventions, harmful side effects. In contrast, I argue that obesity elimination is wrong because it oppresses fat people, regardless of its accuracy or efficacy. In this keynote, I provide a set of conceptual tools for understanding this relationship, showing how obesity elimination efforts contribute to fat oppression even when cloaked in the language of “weight inclusion” and “stigma reduction.”



Health professionals must go beyond weight inclusion by resisting eliminationist ideas and practices at clinical, professional, and institutional levels. In the era of GLP-1 weight loss drugs, this is the only way for health professionals to fight against fat oppression.

Scientific Session 1 “Inside the Clinical Encounter: Systems, Industry, and Patient Experience”



1 Size-Inclusive Care Innovations

Hillary Hecht K, MSW

Explores clinician perspectives on implementing size-inclusive care using the Health Equity Implementation Framework, highlighting practical strategies and barriers in real-world settings.

2 Why Would They Do That?

Ragen Chastain, MEd, BCPA

Analyzes the logic and influence of the weight loss industry, challenging assumptions about individual choice and highlighting systemic drivers.

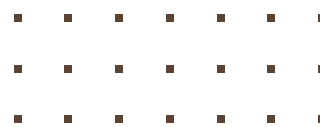
3 Please Step on the Scale

Angela Incollingo Rodriguez, PhD

Examines how weighing practices impact physiological outcomes and patient experience, including sustained effects on blood pressure.

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Scientific Session 2 “The Consequences of Weight Stigma: Evidence, Inequities, and Health Outcomes”



4 Weight Stigma and Healthcare Avoidance

Virginia Ramseyer Winter, PhD, LGSW

Investigates how weight stigma predicts avoidance of healthcare and chronic disease management among Black adults.

5 Pregnancy at Every Size (Beta-Test)

Catherine Fredericks, BA

Evaluates an intervention designed to reduce weight stigma in prenatal care and improve patient-centered outcomes.

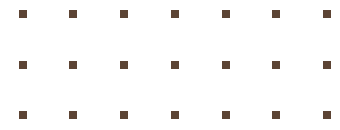
6 Patient Experiences Across the Fat Spectrum

Emma D’Arpino, PhD, MS-HPed, RD, LDN

Explores how patients experience weight stigma differently across body sizes in outpatient healthcare settings.

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Scientific Session 3 “Changing the System: Education, Intervention, and the Future Workforce”



7 The Paradox of Empathy

Nicula Maria

Explores how anti-fat bias develops during medical training and professional socialization.

8 Weight Bias in Medical Students

Erin Harrop, PhD, LICSW

Presents a pilot intervention using critical consciousness to address weight bias in medical education.

9 Building a Community of Practice

Cory Campbell

Examines strategies for creating sustainable, weight-inclusive care communities in clinical settings.

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Virtual Poster Session

Full Poster Titles & Authors

The virtual poster session features 17 peer-reviewed projects from clinicians, researchers, and trainees advancing weight-inclusive care.

Breakoutroom #1

Work in Progress - Practicing medicine while fat: How higher-weight medical learners balance anti-fat bias and lived experience in clinical care

Sophia Hou, MPH RD

The effect of curriculum on weight stigma in medical students: a cross-sectional and longitudinal approach

Courtney Difilippo

Beyond a Single Axis: Centering Intersectionality in Weight Stigma Research with Sexual minority women and nonbinary adults

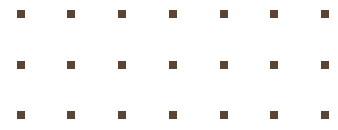
Lauren Fowler

“People Won’t Stop Commenting on it”: Understanding How Individuals Communicate About Unsolicited Body Comments on Reddit

Ashleigh Shields, , PhD, MPH

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Virtual Poster Session



Breakoutroom #2

Body Stigma and Food Insecurity: How the Cultural Attitude Towards Weight Amplifies Hunger and Perpetuates Disordered Eating Pathology

Emily Bouzan

Operationalizing Weight-Inclusive Care Across Eating Disorders: Addressing Restriction, Resistance, and Socially Reinforced Weight Stigma

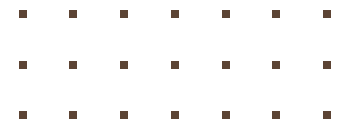
Dr. Wendy Oliver-Pyatt

Existential Injury in Weight-Stigmatized Care: A Work-in-Progress Framework for Eating Disorder Treatment

Nicole Marshall Concha, LMHC

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Virtual Poster Session



Breakoutroom #3

Is Obesity a Protective Feature of Metabolic Syndrome?

Natasha Wiebe, BMath MMath PStat

Investigating Weight Bias in Genetics Referrals for Marfan Syndrome

Caide Bier, , MS

A Systematic Review Comparing the Efficacy of Weight-Neutral and Weight-Loss Interventions on Metabolic Health in People with Larger Bodies

Madhuri Rao, MD

Using the Four Pillars Approach to Advance Weight-Inclusive Medicine for Those with Diabetes

Janice Dada, MPH, RDN, CDCES, CEDRD

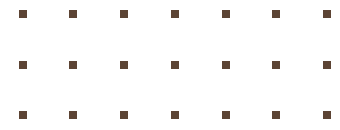
Case Report Abstract for AWSIM conference: 18-year old JH

Takahiro Yamaguchi, MD with assistance from Jessica Rosenblum, MS4

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Virtual Poster Session

Breakoutroom #4



“It’s not all about me—we need support at a higher level”: Multi-level barriers to practicing weight-inclusive care in primary care

Binoli Herath

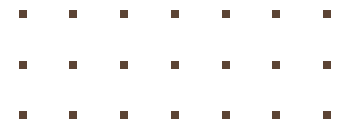
“You always let me decide”: Assessing strengths and opportunities in caring for patients with larger bodies at a primary care clinic

Laurel Neufeld

“I always dread having to go to the scale when I go to the doctors”: The Experience of Suspending Routine Weigh-Ins

Holly Russell, , M.D. M.S.

Virtual Poster Session



Breakoutroom #5

Developing and Applying a Weight Inclusiveness Audit Tool in Ambulatory Care Clinics

Shannon Roosma-Goldstein, MPH, BSN, RN, NPD-BC

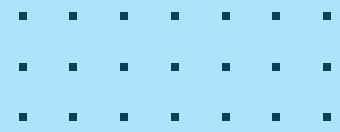
Shaping the Future of Size-Inclusive Care: Lessons from a medical student elective in a low-income, urban family medicine clinic

Mara Gordon, MD

The Weight Inclusive Toolkit Initiative (WITI): Decrease Weight Stigma, Valuing Lived Experience, and Providing (Weight) Inclusive Nutrition Counseling Resources to Dietitian Training Programs Across the US

Amanda Jochimsen RD, Ragen Chastain MEd, BCPA

Keynote



Title

The Future of Weight-Inclusive Care in the Era of GLP-1 Medications

Speaker

Dr. Lesley Williams, MD

As GLP-1 medications reshape the landscape of clinical care, clinicians are increasingly navigating complex conversations around weight, health, and patient autonomy.

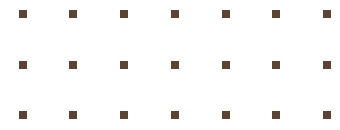
This session explores how to engage in these discussions using a weight-inclusive, patient-centered approach. It also examines how the rise of GLP-1 therapies may reinforce weight stigma—and how clinicians can respond thoughtfully in practice.

- Apply weight-inclusive principles in conversations about GLP-1 medications
- Use shared decision-making approaches that center patient autonomy
- Identify ways GLP-1 use may reinforce weight stigma in clinical care



Dr. Lesley Williams is a board-certified Family Medicine physician, eating disorders specialist, and Certified Menopause Practitioner at Mayo Clinic Arizona. Her work focuses on eating disorder prevention and size-inclusive care. She is an author and a recognized expert contributing to national initiatives, including WithAll.org and SAMHSA's Eating Disorder Center of Excellence.

Clinical Integration Roundtable: Translating Weight-Inclusive Evidence into Practice



A facilitated clinical discussion focused on translating weight-inclusive principles into real-world practice. Participants will identify one actionable change, explore common barriers in weight-centric systems, and exchange strategies with peers.

AWSIM Annual Governance & Leadership Meeting

Don Doering, PhD
Executive Director AWSIM

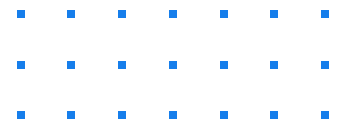
This session provides insight into AWSIM's leadership, strategic direction, and future initiatives.

Participants will:

- Understand how medical organizations influence clinical standards
- Explore strategies to advance weight-inclusive care
- Identify leadership pathways in this field

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Contact Information



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