



May 13, 2025

Dear Members of the Oregon Public Employees' Benefit Board (PEBB),

**As the CEO of the Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention (AWHP), an organization focused on women's preventive health, I am writing to respectfully urge you to prioritize coverage of obesity management medications in PEBB health plans.**

As the Board reviews the benefits of its health plan offerings, consider that obesity is a serious chronic disease that has a significant impact on Oregon's public employees, particularly women:

- **34% of Oregon women are affected by obesity**, with a disproportionate impact on women of color.
- Obesity is associated with over 200 health complications, including many that specifically affect women, such as breast and ovarian cancers and fertility challenges.
- Across the country, women with obesity are more likely to face **harmful social stigma and discrimination** — including earning up to 9% less than women not living with obesity.

Obesity also has a tremendous economic burden for the state of Oregon, highlighting the urgent need for effective prevention and treatment strategies. In 2023 alone, obesity and overweight cost the **state economy approximately \$6.2 billion**.

AWHP believes that **insurance coverage for the full scope of obesity care options**—including intensive behavioral therapy, nutrition services, surgery, and obesity management medications—**is critical to improving women's health across Oregon**.

Specifically, new obesity management medications could transform how we manage obesity and prevent associated health complications. **Coverage for these medications could improve the health of countless Oregon residents, especially women**, living with obesity. Improved access to this care also has the potential to protect the state from incurring additional medical costs that result from the serious health complications linked to obesity and related diseases. In fact, a new analysis from Aon found that coverage for some obesity management medications was associated with lower healthcare costs for employers and improved health of employees.

**As such, AWHP respectfully encourages you to prioritize efforts that would ensure coverage for comprehensive obesity care, including obesity management medications, across PEBB health plans.** Doing so aligns with several of PEBB's core values, including improving quality of care, increasing equity, reducing costs for employers, and promoting a positive healthcare experience for members.

**If you care about women's health, you must care about obesity too.** We appreciate your attention to this important issue.

Respectfully,  
Millicent Gorham  
CEO, Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention