Improving Management of Pediatric Obesity: Outcomes of an Interactive Educational Curriculum for Pediatricians

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Background

- Obesity affects approximately 1 in 5 children and adolescents in the United States and is associated with significant morbidity and detrimental psychosocial effects.
- Modest BMI reduction can significantly improve health, and patients and caregivers desire respectful engagement for obesity management.
- However, pediatric HCPs often do not address obesity, frequently citing limited training and lack of experience.

Aim

In partnership with Obesity Medicine Association and Smart Patients, develop an interactive educational curriculum to improve pediatric HCPs' competence in identifying, discussing, and managing pediatric obesity.

Methods

- CME/CE-certified activities in the program included a live symposium, an on-demand webcast, and text-based expert commentaries.
- Smart Patients contributed **caregiver focus group findings** to highlight care gaps experienced by pediatric patients with obesity.
- **Multiple assessments** (preactivity and postactivity questions, polling, comments from small-group case discussions, evaluation responses) were used to gauge **knowledge, competence, confidence, and intended practice changes** among learners who participated in live and/or enduring activities.

Conclusion

- **Improved postactivity assessments** support benefits of educational programs to promote better obesity management for pediatric patients.
- Assessments reflect learners' **reliance on lifestyle management**, although evaluation responses indicate the **intent to increase OM use**.
- Activities including application of obesity management principles and feedback could increase HCP confidence and address care gaps.

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BMI, body mass index; HCP, healthcare professional; OM, obesity medication.

Indications of Educational Need

Care gaps identified by Smart Patients caregiver focus group

- Insufficient discussion of pediatric obesity and treatment approaches
- Stigma and inadequate training
- Lack of routine screening, diagnosis, assessment, and individualized care plans

"I wish they had done more than tell the child she was overweight. They offered no solutions."

"Most have never had any training . . . they are only exposed to the same misinformation from our culture."

"The doctor only referred to dietitian . . . has not done or said anything else."

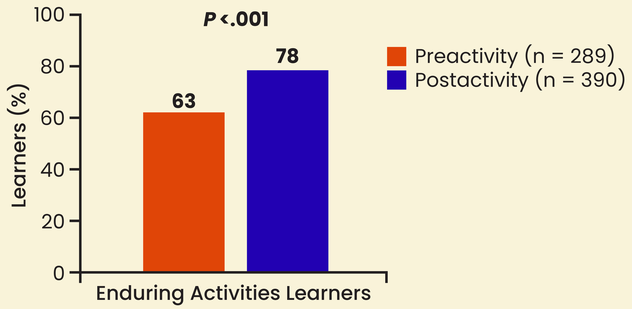
High interest and low familiarity with content among learners

- **9531 learners** completed live or enduring activities; 1200 were anticipated
- **65%** of respondents indicated **most of the information was new to them**

Curriculum Participation Outcomes

Applying Strategies for Productive Conversations on Obesity

Learners Choosing Correct Answer to Explore Factors Affecting Weight
Incorrect answers included stigmatizing language or focused on diet and exercise
Significant improvement after activity participation, but room for improvement



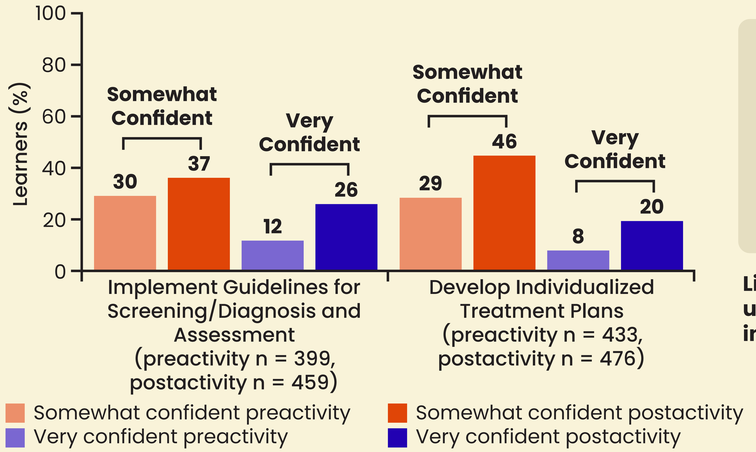
93% of live activity learners **recognized the importance of:**

- Asking permission
- Nonstigmatizing language
- Discussion in the context of overall health

Live activity discussion themes: sensitive communication, exploration of contributing factors (eg, psychosocial, medication)

Screening/Diagnosis, Assessment, and Individualized Treatment

Confidence in Screening/Diagnosis, Assessment, and Treatment
Modest but significant confidence level improvements postactivity ($P < .05$)
Proportions of "Somewhat Confident" and "Very Confident" learners shown

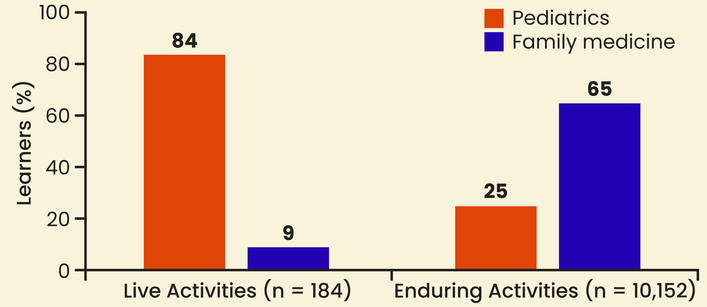


Live Activity Polling

- **92%** appropriately indicated use of BMI for screening
- Only 10% felt patients should be referred to a specialist for obesity management
- Only 29% indicated use of OMs for their patients

Live activity discussion theme: use of lifestyle management for intervention

Learner Breakdown: Top Patient Care Specialties (Specialties Identified by >2% of Learners)



Practice Impact

59% of learners indicated intent to make practice changes

- Most common change identified: apply the latest guidelines/research
- Most common change themes: respectful/empathetic communication, routine screening/evaluation, consider/use OMs

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