

# OBESITY IN LATINO COMMUNITIES & THE ROLE OF GLP-1 MEDICATIONS

Obesity is one of the most urgent and costly health challenges in the U.S. **Latino communities — nearly 20% of the total population — face higher rates of obesity and related conditions.** One in four Latino adults has obesity, compared to one in six non-Hispanic Whites, and **Latina women have the highest rates nationwide.** Latino adults are also more likely to develop **diabetes, heart disease and certain weight-related cancers.** Yet access to care, including **GLP-1 medications like Wegovy and Ozempic,** remains limited by **cost and coverage gaps.**

*Without **policy action,** these life-changing therapies may **bypass the very communities** most affected by the disease.*

## The Role of GLP-1 Medications

GLP-1 medications help manage weight, control glucose and reduce heart risk, but unequal access threatens to widen health disparities. Access should be paired with education, prevention and culturally competent care to ensure lasting impact in Latino communities.

### Data Snapshot

Just **2% of eligible patients** access anti-obesity drugs because of cost and coverage gaps. GLP-1s **reduce weight by 15–20%** and boost heart and metabolic health.

## Policy Priorities for Obesity Equity

Congress should act to ensure equitable access to obesity prevention and treatment by:

### Expand Coverage for Obesity Care

- Support the **Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA)** to extend **Medicare coverage** for FDA-approved medications and counseling
- Encourage **state Medicaid programs** to include **comprehensive obesity prevention and treatment services**

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### Invest in Workforce Diversity

- **Reauthorize Title VII and VIII programs** to help increase **Latino representation** in obesity and chronic disease care fields

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### Advance Health Literacy & Prevention

- Fund **community-based obesity prevention and nutrition programs** through **trusted organizations** and **Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)**

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### Strengthen Oversight, Data and Accountability

- Enhance **FDA and FTC oversight** to curb counterfeit and unapproved GLP-1 products sold online and via social media
- Require **HHS to collect and report disaggregated obesity data** by race and ethnicity to inform **targeted, equitable interventions**

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