



Together for a Healthier. More Prosperous Texas.

April 16, 2026

Ms. Stephanie Muth
Executive Commissioner
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78751

Re: Support for the Texas Medicaid Department to Participate in the CMS BALANCE Model

Dear Commissioner Muth,

On behalf of the *Texans for Obesity Treatment and Access Coalition (TOTAC)*, we write to express our strong support for Texas Medicaid to participate in the [CMS BALANCE Model](#), an essential initiative designed to expand access to evidence-based obesity treatments and strengthen the health and prosperity of Texas. This innovative CMS opportunity directly supports Section 2 of [President Trump's Make America Health Again \(MAHA\) Executive Order #14212](#) which states...

"It shall be the policy of the Federal Government to aggressively combat the critical health challenges facing our citizens, including the rising rates of mental health disorders, obesity, diabetes, and other chronic diseases."

More than one in three adults in Texas live with obesity, making the condition one of the most significant public health and economic challenges facing our state. Obesity is a complex, multi-factorial, and chronic disease that requires a comprehensive medical approach to care. It is the second leading preventable cause of death in the U.S., and is associated with numerous [co-morbid conditions](#), including diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, liver disorders and other largely preventable illnesses.

The resulting medical costs and lost productivity are substantial—studies estimate that obesity-related conditions cost Texas over \$10 billion annually in direct healthcare expenses and indirect economic losses. By improving prevention, access to care, and early treatment, participation in the BALANCE Model has the potential to significantly reduce these costs while improving quality of life for millions of Texans.

A recently published article, [The Benefits and Costs of Treating Obesity Among Adults in the Medicaid Program](#), demonstrates that changes in body weight and cardiometabolic risk factors

associated with providing specific obesity treatments would reduce the incidence of several chronic conditions generating multiple social benefits such as medical cost savings, productivity improvements, additional quality-adjusted life-years, and mortality reductions.

- Among people with no prior history of type 2 diabetes, results indicate that second-generation obesity medicines (GLP-1s) can prevent 45% of new cases compared with no treatment.
- Second generations obesity medicines also would reduce hypertension incidence by 45% and were the most effective across all interventions.
- Coronary heart disease, heart attack and stroke incidence would decline by rates of 18%, 31% and 27% respectively with use of second-generation OMs.

From a medical expense, quality of life and state economic impact perspective, the reduced incidence of these preventable, chronic and costly conditions cannot be ignored.

The BALANCE Model represents a comprehensive and pragmatic approach that:

- Aligns with the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) priority of addressing obesity and associated comorbidities through prevention and access to evidence-based treatments
- Expands access to effective medications, such as GLP-1s
- Incorporates important lifestyle interventions
- Reduces disparities affecting rural, low-income, and minority Texans
- Integrates prevention and early intervention, cutting long-term healthcare costs and chronic disease rates
- Enables the TX Medicaid department to provide access to GLP-1 medications at significantly reduced costs due to CMS negotiations

Beyond its health benefits, addressing obesity is an economic imperative. Every dollar invested in obesity prevention and treatment can yield multiple dollars in savings through reduced healthcare costs, improved well-being of individuals and families and increased workforce productivity. As healthier Texans contribute to a stronger economy, this initiative supports both public health and fiscal responsibility.

We respectfully urge the Health and Human Services Commission to advance the BALANCE Model as a top strategic priority and enroll Texas to participate. We also extend our appreciation to Governor Abbott and Lt. Governor Patrick for their commitment to policies that promote a healthier, more prosperous Texas.

Thank you for your continued leadership and dedication to improving the lives of Texans.

Sincerely,

Obesity Action Coalition

American Diabetes Association

Ms. Tammy Beaumont – Advocate & Patient

Mrs. Amy Beattt – Waechter Consulting Group

Dr. Tom Baranowski, Ph.D. – Baylor College of Medicine

Dr. Arusha Bavare, M.D. – Vanguard Inpatient Physicians

Mr. Tom Banning – Texas Academy of Family Physicians

Mrs. Josie Cooper – Alliance for Patient Access

Dr. Tiffany Cortes, M.D. – UT Health San Antonio

Dr. Bethany Cartwright, M.D. – UT Southwestern

Dr. Sara Dean, DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC – Women's Health

Dr. Mayralis De Jesus, M.D. – Conviva

Dr. Aleksandra Dukhan – San Antonio Obesity Society

Dr. Triwana Fisher-Wikoff – Chemin Obesity Medicine

Dr. Maeghan Gibson – UT Southwestern

Dr. Gaurav Kudchadkar – Texas Tech University

Ms. Abby Lentz – Advocate & Patient

Ms. Lauren Loftin – Advocate & Patient

Ms. Michelle Mata – Advocate & Patient

Ms. Kesha Calicutt – Advocate & Patient

Dr. Alanna Meadows, D.O.

Dr. Athena Nathan – Prolific Health Center

Dr. Olga Nunez, M.D. – Texas Undergraduate Medical Academy at Prairie View A&M University.

Dr. Fabian V Rodas, M.D. – The Texas Liver Institute

Mr. Andrew Rittler – Advocate & Patient

Dr. Jennifer Seger – San Antonio Obesity Society

Mrs. Jennifer Kucera – Sweeny Medical Clinic

Mrs. Roberta W – Texas Renal Coalition

CC:

The Honorable Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas

The Honorable Dan Patrick, Lieutenant Governor of Texas

The Honorable Dustin Burrows, on behalf of the Office of the Speaker of the Texas House

The Honorable Lois Kolkhorst, Chair, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Charles Perry, Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable César Blanco, Member, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Bob Hall, Member, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Molly Cook, Member, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Bryan Hughes, Member, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Borris Miles, Member, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Kevin Sparks, Member, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

The Honorable Lacey Hull, Chair, House Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Christian Manuel, Vice Chair, House Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Aicha Davis, Member, House Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Mark Dorazio, Member, House Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Christina Morales, Member, House Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Candy Noble, Member, House Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Keresa Richardson, Member, House Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Toni Rose, Member, House Committee on Human Services
The Honorable Nate Schatzline, Member, House Committee on Human Services
Ms. Hailey Kemp, Chief Public Affairs Officer
Ms. Emily Zalkovsky, Chief Medicaid/CHIP Services Officer
Ms. Hannah Vardy, Policy Director