



 **DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE**
MEDICAL WEIGHT
MANAGEMENT

Medical Weight Management
Physician Office Center, Morgantown, WV
304-598-4890

WvuMedicine.org/WeightMgmt

Annual Report
2023-2024



DIRECTOR MESSAGE

In our fifth year, Medical Weight Management has expanded its clinical services, seeing an increase in patient volume and corresponding growth in clinical staffing. As obesity care models rapidly evolve, our team members are playing active roles in this transformation by serving in leadership roles in regional and national organizations. Our program's reputation has garnered significant media attention, and we are excited to partner with the WVU Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute (RNI). RNI's groundbreaking work, featured on CBS News' *60 Minutes*, will soon extend to research on obesity treatment.



LAURA DAVISSON MD, MPH, FACP

*Professor, WVU School of Medicine
Director, Medical Weight Management*

MISSION

Medical Weight Management's mission is to empower individuals and families to improve their health and make lasting lifestyle changes using science and care delivered by a team of experts.



AMERICAN BOARD
of OBESITY MEDICINE



Clinical Outcomes

This year, our efforts were recognized with several awards. Our multidisciplinary, team-based care received the WVU HSC Chancellor's Go First Team Award. Individual team members also earned department accolades. Dr. Tara Rickard received the Best Attending Physician Award and fellow Dr. Luis Nieto received the Albrink Research Award.

This annual report outlines our progress in our clinical mission and our broader vision. It details our initiatives to improve health in West Virginia and the populations served through outreach, education, research, and clinical management of obesity.

Key Insights

384%

Increase in Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions since 2019 (from 3.3 to 16 FTE)

55%

Of program's total visits were completed by telemedicine in 2023

37%

Increase in New Patient Visits (NPVs) from 2022 to 2023



59%

Increase in total completed visits to 8,742 in 2023

New Roles Added

- Lead APP
- Health Coaches
- Pharmacist
- Pharmacist Technician



Clinical Outcomes

13.2%

Overall program one-year weight loss

3%

Reduction in ASCVD risk score

16.5%

WVU Medicine Employee program average weight loss 2022-2023 participants

14%

Decrease in BMI from 42.8 (Class 3 obesity) to 36.8 (Class 2 obesity)

Meet The Team



Laura Davisson, MD



Lauren Cox, Pt Nav



Treah Haggerty, MD



Ayesha Hassan, MD



Tara Rickard, MD



Caroline Rosenberger, RN



Emily Murphy, PhD



Catherine Shaw, RD



Robin Elkins, APRN



Lyn DeChristopher, APP



Amber Shaffer, APP



Rachel; Wattick, RD



Judith Siebart, RD



Susann Faverio, RN



Isabella Negrin, MD



Michelle Ritchie, APPs



Amberly Osbourn, PA



Jacob Rumer



Jennifer Ludrosky, PhD

Pediatric Medical Weight Management

Pediatric Weight Management, under the guidance of Director Dr. Treah Haggerty, saw 90 new patients in 2023. The addition of pediatrician Dr. Isabela Negrin to the team made this increase of 52.5% possible. The program's multidisciplinary family care is provided jointly with pediatric psychologist Dr. Jennifer Ludrosky. Nutrition guidance for the pediatric program is provided by RDs from the Medical Weight Management team. The pediatric team has worked with surgery to prepare to start offering adolescent surgery. They plan to seek to earn adolescent Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Quality Improvement Program (MBSAQIP) accreditation.

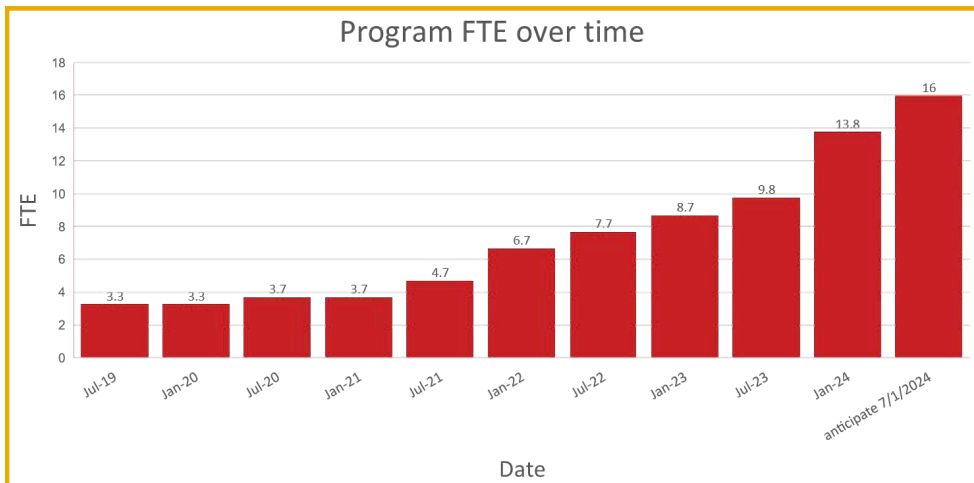


Treah Haggerty, MD, MS
Associate Professor
WVU School of Medicine



Isabela Negrin, MD
Assistant Professor, Pediatrics
WVU School of Medicine

Medical Weight Management Growth



Lauren Cox (patient navigator), Rachel Wattick (registered dietitian), Emily Murphy and Jacob Rumer (health coaches), Michelle Ritchie (nurse practitioner), and Amberly Osbourn (physician assistant) have all been added to the clinical team. Dr. Isabela Negrin also joined with the July 2023 expansion of the pediatrics program. To support program growth, a lead APP position was added (filled by Amber Shaffer), and pharmacist and pharmacy technician positions were approved.



New patient visits have continued to increase steadily (51, 110, and 157 per month in 2021, 2022, and 2023). Accounting for new hires planned to start seeing patients, it is estimated that MWM will see 262 new patients per month in 2024, representing a 414% increase over three years. Medical Weight Management patients in West Virginia and the surrounding communities continued to benefit from telemedicine services. (Note that clinic metrics for this report are measured by the calendar year, whereas academic metrics are measured by the academic year.)

Visit Volume 2021-2023 POC, Glenville, Peds (Medical only)



2023 (compared to 2022, additional 1.0 FTE APP and full year with fellow vs. half year)
Total Completed Visits: increased 59%
New Patient Visits (NPVs): increased 37%

Outreach: Year 5 Highlights



Lunch & Learn

MWM team members shared the leading of 17 talks on health and wellness in 2023. These were offered virtually and were open to anyone in the community.

Produce Prescription Program

In the spring of 2023, produce was distributed to MWM patients weekly for the entire summer and fall. This continued the work started the previous year, and we plan to seek funding to continue the program annually.



First CME Retreat

On Sept. 22, 2023, MWM had its first CME retreat. The goal was to create an atmosphere of relaxation that encouraged staff to prioritize their own well-being so they can set an example of healthy behavior and serve as role models for patients. To cap off the event, a team-building canopy tour was offered.

Employee Program

In partnership with the Finding Wellness program, we significantly transformed our weight loss program for WVU Medicine employees this year and rebranded it as “Weight Loss and Wellness.” Results will be reported after the first year of the program concludes.

Outreach: Year 5 Highlights



First 5K

On Sept. 24, 2023, MWM hosted a 5K/2K. The event included a 5K race and a 2K walk on the paved rail trail. Medals and prizes were awarded to top finishers in the 5K run, while the 2K walk was non-competitive. Attendance was open to the public, and attendees were encouraged to invite friends and family, as well as pets, to the event.

Media

WVU MWM's RD Judy Siebart was featured in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and is a regular contributor on the WMBS Radio show. Dr. Treah Haggerty and Dr. Laura Davisson were also featured in the media this year, with outlets including *Time Magazine*, *STAT news*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *The Atlantic*, *Becker's Hospital Review*, *NBC News*, *WV MetroNews Talkline with Hoppy Kercheval*, *Loseit.com*, and *Today Show*.

Advocacy

Cathy Shaw, RD, remained an active member of the WV Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) public policy team and the Weight Management DPG policy committee. She met with state and national legislatures to advocate for nutrition policy and the Medical Nutrition Therapy Act, prioritizing the RD's role. Dr. Davisson remained on the Obesity Medicine Association Advocacy Committee and continued to advocate for the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA). The resolution she spearheaded through American College of Physicians (ACP) was modified and endorsed by the ACP Board of Regents at the Fall 2023 Board meeting. It calls for updating ACPs Action plan for advocating for universal coverage of obesity treatment.

Research and Scholarship

MWM team members made significant scholarly contributions. They published 12 obesity-related manuscripts and abstracts. Fellow Dr. Luis Nieto presented posters at ACG, Rural Health, WV ACP, and DDW, with the WV ACP presentation taking second place! Dr. Nieto was productive in TriNetX, with numerous posters and two oral presentations accepted from this work. The EMANATE Phase 3 Rhythm pharmaceutical-sponsored clinical trial of setmelanotide continued. Dr. Haggerty received an Obesity High grant with Emily Murphy from the CDC for children and families.

Team members gave six talks at regional or national conferences. Our clinicians were actively involved in six state or national committees, including the Obesity Medicine Fellowship Council (LD), the National Rural Health Association Rural Obesity & Chronic Disease Committee (TH), and the WV Medicaid P&T committee (LD). Dr. Davisson completed a four-year term as WV ACP Governor in April and then joined the WV SMA Board of Trustees. She also joined the Mid-Atlantic Obesity Society founding Board of Directors. Dr. Haggerty also received a well-deserved promotion to professor, effective July 1, 2024.



Education

Part of Medical Weight Management’s mission is to improve education and create a workforce to treat obesity in WV. The team welcomed and educated medical students from all four years of training and students, residents, and fellows from various disciplines. We were pleased to receive approval for a new medical student elective in Nutrition and Obesity developed by Dr. Hassan.

The Internal Medicine Residency Program has started a new track in obesity medicine. Residents enrolling in the Obesity Medicine Track will develop valuable skills in nutrition and obesity treatment. This was our second year of the Nutrition and Metabolic Diseases Fellowship for advanced physician training in obesity treatment. We are thrilled to announce the graduation of our second fellow, Dr. Luis Nieto, in June 2024. He will be starting a gastroenterology fellowship at Emory. Dr. Areeba Altaf will be joining us as our next fellow in July 2024.

69

Learners rotated through MWM

164

MWM Clinic Sessions

22

Lectures on obesity topics

Future:

We look forward to advancing obesity treatment at WVU Medicine by working on standardizing care, implementing clinical protocols, and continuing to collect data on outcomes to optimize the quality of obesity care within our system.



Publications

Nieto L, Argueta P, Narvaez S, Davisson L, Singh S, Thakkar S. *Glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists do not increase the risk for acute pancreatitis and are not associated with complications in patients with obesity who develop it: a population-based cohort study in the United States.* Digestive Diseases Week. May 2024. Poster presentation

Nieto L, Argueta P, Narvaez S, Davisson L, Singh S, Thakkar S. *Glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists use does not increase the risk for acute pancreatitis and is associated with lower complications in patients with type 2 diabetes who develop acute pancreatitis: a multi-center analysis.* Digestive Diseases Week. May 2024. Poster presentation

Nieto L, Narvaez S, Davisson L, Haggerty T, Boatman D. *An Update Regarding Attitudes of Rural West Virginia Primary Care Providers when Related to Patient with Obesity.* WV Rural Health Conference. Nov 2023. Poster presentation

Nieto, Luis, Narvaez S, Lukens F, Keilin S, Argueta P, Davisson L, Singh S. *Patients with Ischemic Colitis and Obesity Present at a Younger Age but Do Not Have Worse Outcomes.* ACG. Vancouver, Oct. 2023. Poster presentation and abstract publication: American Journal of Gastroenterology, Oct 2023. 118(10):S153-154.

Nieto L, Narvaez S, Davisson L, Haggerty T, Boatman D. *An Update Regarding Attitudes of Rural West Virginia Primary Care Providers when Related to Patient with Obesity.* WV ACP. Nov 2023. Poster presentation



Publications

Anees A, Saeed Z, Kemper S, Haggerty T, Davisson L. *Knowledge and Practices of Primary Care Residents in Managing Adult Patients with Obesity*. J Gen Intern Med, 4/2024.

Haggerty T, Milligan S, Davisson L, Cavrak M, Imlay R, Sedney C. *Significant Symptom Resolution of Spinal Lipomatosis with Weight Loss*. Clin Case Rep. 9/8/2023.

Dolly A, Davisson L. *Assessing the barriers rural physicians face to provide nutrition counseling to patients with diabetes*. WVU Dept. of Medicine Research Day. May 2024. Oral presentation

Haggerty T, Dekeseredy P, Davisson L, Bailey J. *“I expect my overall health and well-being to be profoundly worse as a result of this decision”: Exploring patient perceptions of losing insurance coverage of anti-obesity medications*. WVU Dept. of Medicine Research Day. May 2024. Oral presentation

Nieto L, Narvaez S, Argueta P, Martinez J, Davisson L, Vega K. *BoPatients with MAFLD taking glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists do not have higher incidence for hepatobiliary cancer but have lower overall mortality: a multi-center analysis*. Digestive Diseases Week. May 2024. Oral presentation

Nieto L, Narvaez S, Argueta P, Martinez J, Vega K, Davisson L. *Glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonist use is associated with lower incidence of hepatobiliary or pancreatic cancer in patients with type 2 diabetes: a multi-center cohort study across the United States*. Digestive Diseases Week. May 2024. Poster presentation

Nieto L, Mejia D, Argueta P, Narvaez S, Davisson L, Thakkar S, Singh S. *Glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonist Use is Associated with Lower Mortality and Improvement of Cardiovascular Outcomes in Patients with MAFLD and Obesity: A Multi-center Analysis*. Digestive Diseases Week. May 2024. Oral presentation

Media Coverage

Interview WV Metronews, PEIA says cost for weight loss drugs is crushing, but people also want and need access, column by Brad McElhinny, 6/27/2024

Interview Loseit.com, Is Short-term Ozempic Use Ever Okay?, column by Paige Brettingen, 6/26/2024

Interview NY Times, In States That Won't Pay for Obesity Drugs, 'They May as Well Have Never Been Created', column by Oliver Whang, 6/25/2024

Interview Loseit.com, How Fast Does Weight Loss Happen on GLP-1 Drugs?, column by Paige Brettingen, 6/15/2024

Interview Loseit.com, 7 questions to ask your doctor before taking a weight loss drug, column by Paige Brettingen, 6/14/2024

Interview Medscape, Helping patients navigate high costs of GLP-1 medications, column by Steph Weber, 6/3/2024

Television Interview, Today Show, What happens when popular weight loss drugs don't work?, 4/2/2024

Interview Becker's Hospital Review, Health systems double down on weight loss programs, 2/29/2024

Interview NBC, Popular weight loss drugs remain out of reach for many who need them, column by Marina Kopf and Jason Kane, 1/30/2024

Interview Becker's Hospital Review, WVU Medicine pilots weight loss program for employees, 1/23/2024



Media Coverage

Interview The Atlantic, Are you sure you want an Ozempic pill?, column by Yasmin Tayag, 12/2023

Radio Interview WV Metronews Statewide Talkline with Hoppy Kerchival, Obesity Medications, 11/2023

Interview Time. Should We End Obesity?, column by Jamie Ducharme, 11/8/2023

Interview Associated Press, Supply problems and insurance issues make popular weight-loss drugs hard to get, column by Tom Murphy, 9/16/2023

Author Pittsburgh Post Gazette Expert Insights column, Unpacking the discourse around Ozempic and related medications for weight loss, 8/26/2023

Author Pittsburgh Post Gazette Expert Insights column, Food Insecurity Impacts 9.4% of Pennsylvanians, 9/29/2023

Interview Pittsburgh Post Gazette, Picklesburgh is nearly upon us. So how healthy are those brined bites? 7/15/2023

Author Pittsburgh Post Gazette Expert Insights column, Kicking the diet soda habit after the WHO decision, 7/24/2023





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THANK YOU!

Medical weight management’s vision is to improve health in our region through outreach, education, research, and clinical management of obesity.

