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OCAN Applauds CMS For Taking Action to Extend Medicare and Medicaid Coverage to Obesity Medications

The Obesity Care Advocacy Network (OCAN) applauds the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for its proposal to align coverage policy to reflect the understanding that obesity is a chronic disease. The proposed rule would extend access to obesity treatment for millions of Americans, empowering people with obesity to live healthier and happier lives.

OCAN has long advocated for CMS to modernize its outdated interpretation prohibiting Medicare Part D coverage of obesity medications. Over the last four years, OCAN has met several times with members of the Biden administration to ask them to reconsider the interpretation of the law and to approve coverage for obesity medications in the Medicare Part D program. In May of 2024, OCAN joined with 57 organizations in sending a letter to the administration calling on CMS to provide access to comprehensive obesity care.

In addition to reflecting the best available science, CMS's new interpretation has significant implications for reducing the burden of obesity-related conditions, such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, which carry substantial financial and health consequences for Medicare.

OCAN urges the incoming administration to support the proposed rule, which would ensure beneficiaries with obesity have access to obesity medications.

Founded in 2015, OCAN is a diverse group of organizations focused on changing how we perceive and approach obesity in the United States. OCAN works to increase access to evidence-based obesity treatments by uniting key stakeholders and the broader obesity community around significant education, policy and legislative efforts. We aim to fundamentally change how the U.S. healthcare system treats obesity, and to shift the cultural mindset on obesity so that policymakers and the public address obesity as a serious chronic disease.