

### ABOUT THIS VIDEO

This 17-minute video, hosted by former supermodel and activist Emme, is designed to help health care providers improve delivery of care to patients with obesity. Brought to you by the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at the University of Connecticut, this video features expert commentary from professional obesity researchers and dramatic representation to address the bias and stigma that patients with obesity face in health care settings. This video aims to raise awareness of the sources and consequences of weight bias in health care, and provides a range of practical strategies to optimize the health care experience for patients of higher weight.

This video is ideal as an educational tool to be used in medical staff trainings, medical school curricula, and health care continuing education.

### WHY WEIGHT BIAS?

*“I became very frustrated when a doctor disregarded what I was telling him because he had already made up his mind that obesity was at the root of all my problems.”*

Research shows that patients with obesity frequently feel stigmatized in health care settings. Even providers with the best intentions may inadvertently interact with their heavier patients in a biased way.

When patients with obesity feel stigmatized, they are vulnerable to depression, low self-esteem, unhealthy eating behaviors, and may even avoid future health care services because of negative experiences with providers.

**As the majority of Americans are now with overweight or obesity, weight bias is an important clinical concern that no provider can afford to ignore.**

### TIPS FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS

Before presenting this video, think about how it applies to your particular audience. You can present your audience with a few introductory questions that they may consider as they are watching the video. Some examples of questions to ask before the video begins:

- ▶ *What are your current views about patients with obesity?*
- ▶ *How comfortable are you working with patients of different sizes?*
- ▶ *What kind of feedback do you give patients with obesity?*
- ▶ *Are you sensitive to the needs and concerns of individuals with obesity?*

**WEIGHT BIAS IN HEALTH CARE is available at:**

[www.uconnruddcenter.org/weightbias](http://www.uconnruddcenter.org/weightbias)



## AFTER THE VIDEO: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ▶ Review the questions presented prior to watching the video. Ask your audience to share their thoughts.
- ▶ Have you experienced any challenges in providing treatment to patients with obesity? If so, what were these challenges? How did you deal with these obstacles?
- ▶ What do you think are the most common stereotypes about individuals with obesity? Do you believe that these stereotypes are generally true or false?
- ▶ Do you think that stereotypes about persons with obesity could affect the way that they are treated by health professionals? If yes, in what ways do you think their care may be compromised? If no, why not?
- ▶ In light of the challenges that providers confront when treating patients with obesity, what kind of strategies can providers use to ensure sensitive, compassionate care that is free of weight bias?
- ▶ How can health care providers improve their communication strategies with patients with obesity to encourage healthful behavior change?

## REVIEW: KEY STRATEGIES

- 1) Consider that patients may have previously experienced bias from providers
- 2) Recognize that being affected by overweight is a product of many factors, and that it is difficult to sustain significant weight loss
- 3) Explore all causes of the patient's presenting problems, not just weight
- 4) Recognize that many patients have tried to lose weight repeatedly
- 5) Emphasize the importance of making behavior changes rather than focusing only on weight
- 6) Acknowledge the difficulty of making lifestyle changes, and provide support
- 7) Recognize that small weight losses can result in important health gains

Additional free resources on **WEIGHT BIAS** for health care providers are available at:

[www.uconnruddcenter.org/weightbias](http://www.uconnruddcenter.org/weightbias)

