

Statewide Collaboration at The Forefront of Inaugural Obesity Summit



Staying true to the spirit of collaboration over competition, the Michigan Bariatric Surgical Collaborative (MBSC) and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) hosted the first annual Obesity Summit, bringing together more than 330 health care providers and health system leaders from across the state of Michigan to learn about advances in treatment and obesity's impact on patients' overall health and well-being.

In addition to the conference, the Obesity Summit hosted a [Collaborative Quality Initiatives \(CQI\) Fair](#), welcoming representatives from 19 CQIs. This was an exciting opportunity for CQI team members to discuss their quality improvement work with summit

attendees and to [showcase the CQIs' impact in a wide range of health care areas including cardiovascular health, hospital safety, health disparities, cancer, and population health.](#)

The first half of the summit focused on the burden of obesity and non-surgical treatment options available to patients. MBSC welcomed Dina Griauzde, MD (Michigan Medicine), Bob O'Rourke, MD (Michigan Medicine), and Jennifer Sandy, DO (Grand Health Partners) to discuss the severity of the obesity epidemic worldwide, as one in eleven adults currently have severe obesity, and how it can impact the metabolic health of patients. Physical health isn't impacted alone-as Maunda Snodgrass, PsyD (Henry Ford Health) encouraged attendees

to be mindful that weight stigma can result in severe mental health concerns including depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and suicidal thoughts.

In session two, Corey Shack, MS (Ascension Borgess) and Pam Webert, MS (Henry Ford Health) discussed the importance of diet and exercise in a treatment plan for bariatric patients. Shack reminded attendees that diets are not one-size-fits-all, and a patient's lifestyle needs to be considered when prescribing a diet. Webert offered attendees tips for encouraging physical activity, such as exercise diaries and finding "exercise snacks" to help patients reach their goals. Finally, Andrew Kraftson, MD (Michigan Medicine) discussed the pharmacological treatment of obesity- an underserved

treatment area that some physicians are hesitant to use. However, Dr. Kraftson showed promising results for patients who incorporated medication into their obesity management plan.

The last two sessions of the day focused on bariatric surgery and post-surgical care for patients. Attendees heard from Paul Kemmeter, MD (Trinity Health St. Mary's Grand Rapids), Allison Schulman, MD (Michigan Medicine), Arthur Carlin, MD (Henry Ford Macomb), and Oliver Varban, MD (Henry Ford Health) about a variety of surgical

techniques and best practices for operative care. Dr. Kemmeter reminded attendees that obesity is a chronic condition and chronic conditions cannot be cured with steel [surgery]. However, for patients who undergo surgery, all types of bariatric surgery procedures in Michigan are now safer than ever thanks to physician collaboration across the state, including participation in MBSC quality improvement initiatives. In Michigan, post-surgical mortality rates have dropped over 60% since the mid-2000s.

As the day wrapped up, post-

surgical care was the focus as Alissa Dandalides, RD (Henry Ford Macomb), Kelly Queen, LPC (Henry Ford Health), Dafina Allen, MD (Wise Weight Management), and Felicia McGee (McLaren Flint) shared their knowledge for making sure patients not only recover well but receive the best possible results from their surgery.

The summit was held on September 23, 2022, in Novi, MI. MBSC received **211 completed provider surveys** at the summit, which the team will use to shape MBSC's quality improvement efforts and future events.

