

Nurses Obesity Network Announcement Release

Nurses Obesity Network April Coalition Launch *Date Issued: April 27*



Leading Nursing Organizations Launch Coalition to Address Challenges of Obesity Within Nursing Community and Beyond

Nurses Obesity Network will engage, support, and activate nurses nationwide as patients living with obesity, caregivers, and advocates calling for better care across diverse communities.

Washington, D.C. — In recognition of [National Minority Health Month](#), members of the leading nurse advocacy organizations are joining forces and raising their voices, to formally announce The Nurses Obesity Network. The [Nurses Obesity Network](#) (NON), which is made up of a diverse set of leading nurse advocacy and membership organizations from across the country, will be committed to changing the way we view, treat, and advance care for people living with obesity — including members of the nursing profession.

The Nurses Obesity Network is comprised of the American Nurses Association (ANA) and American Nurses Foundation (ANF), Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation (HNN), American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP), Haitian Alliance Nurses Association International (HANA-I), National Association of Indian Nurses of America (NAINA), National Black Nurses Association (NBNA), National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN), Philippine Nurses Association of America (PNAA), and the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association (PCNA).

In the coming months, the coalition will announce programs and grassroots activations that will raise awareness and encourage lawmakers to address the challenges of obesity and improve the health of our nation. Collectively, the Nurses Obesity Network and its hundreds of thousands of members will work to become role models for well-being, champions for change, and advocates for better obesity care and treatment.

Obesity is an epidemic that disproportionately impacts communities of color. Currently, 80% of Black women, nearly half of all Black Americans, and 44.8% of Latinx Americans are living with obesity. American Indians and Alaska Natives are also [50% more likely than white Americans](#) to live with obesity, and those [numbers are growing](#) across the board. For Asian Americans, new studies are just now revealing the [serious health disparities among subgroups](#) that were previously masked by data aggregation. As a result of this disproportionate prevalence of obesity, communities of color nationwide are at a [higher risk](#) for many of the leading causes of death such as heart disease, stroke, certain cancers, and COVID-19, all of which are impacted by obesity. According to the U.S. [Health Human](#)

[Services Secretary Xavier Becerra](#), “COVID-19 and the risks it presents to those with obesity have given even greater urgency to our efforts to treat it and beat it.”

“The National Black Nurses Association emphasizes that nurses are vulnerable to the same triggers and barriers that contribute to obesity as the overall population,” **said Martha Dawson, President of the National Black Nurses Association.** “Therefore, it is essential that nurses practice self-care by adopting healthy lifestyle behaviors to improve their wellness status and health outcomes. As the most trusted profession, nurses must serve as role models for our patients. Good overall health translates into good health outcomes, this is true for all populations.”

To that end, the Nurses Obesity Network will work together to address the challenges of obesity in communities of color across the country and within the nursing community, with the goal of nurses becoming role models for better health and healthier lifestyles. In the coming months, the Nurses Obesity Network campaign will engage, support, and activate nurses across the nation in three ways with nurses as:

1. **Patients Living with Obesity;**
2. **Caregivers Paying it Forward in Practice; and**
3. **Advocates for Better Obesity Care**

Obesity is not a condition that people have brought upon themselves. Obesity is a complex, chronic disease that requires more than one approach to weight management and treatment. In many cases, diet and exercise alone are not enough for people living with obesity, and our obesity epidemic is growing. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of states in which at least 35% of residents have obesity has nearly doubled since 2018, from nine states up to 16 states in 2020 – and continues to rise. Estimates suggest that by the year 2030, over 50% of Americans will live with obesity. In the nursing profession, according to the Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation health assessment in 2021, 30% of members are living with obesity and 29% are impacted by being overweight.

For more information on their efforts, or to join the Nurses Obesity Network, please visit nursesobesitynetwork.org.

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The [Nurses Obesity Network](#) is a diverse group of nursing organizations committed to changing the way we view, treat, and advance care for people living with obesity—including members of our nursing profession. There is more to weight than what we see. Obesity is a chronic disease that requires more than one approach to weight management and treatment. More than 2 in 5 Americans are living with obesity today, with disproportionate prevalence in communities of color, yet people living with obesity often lack the medical care they deserve. Collectively, we will become role models for well-being, champions for change, and advocates for better obesity care and treatment.