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The Body Shamer Within: Incorporating the Teaching of Weight Bias Internalization into Weight Bias Education

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Background/Introduction

- Weight stigma is correlated with adverse health outcomes and is typically defined as implicit or explicit.
- Internalization of weight self-bias within a person can occur and be similarly harmful.
- Recent Consensus statement by the American Association of Clinical Endocrinology (AACE) addresses bias and Internalized weight bias (IWB) as determinants of adiposity disease severity.
- Teaching the biology of obesity is helpful to mitigate IWB and removes individual blame. Education around this topic is sparse.

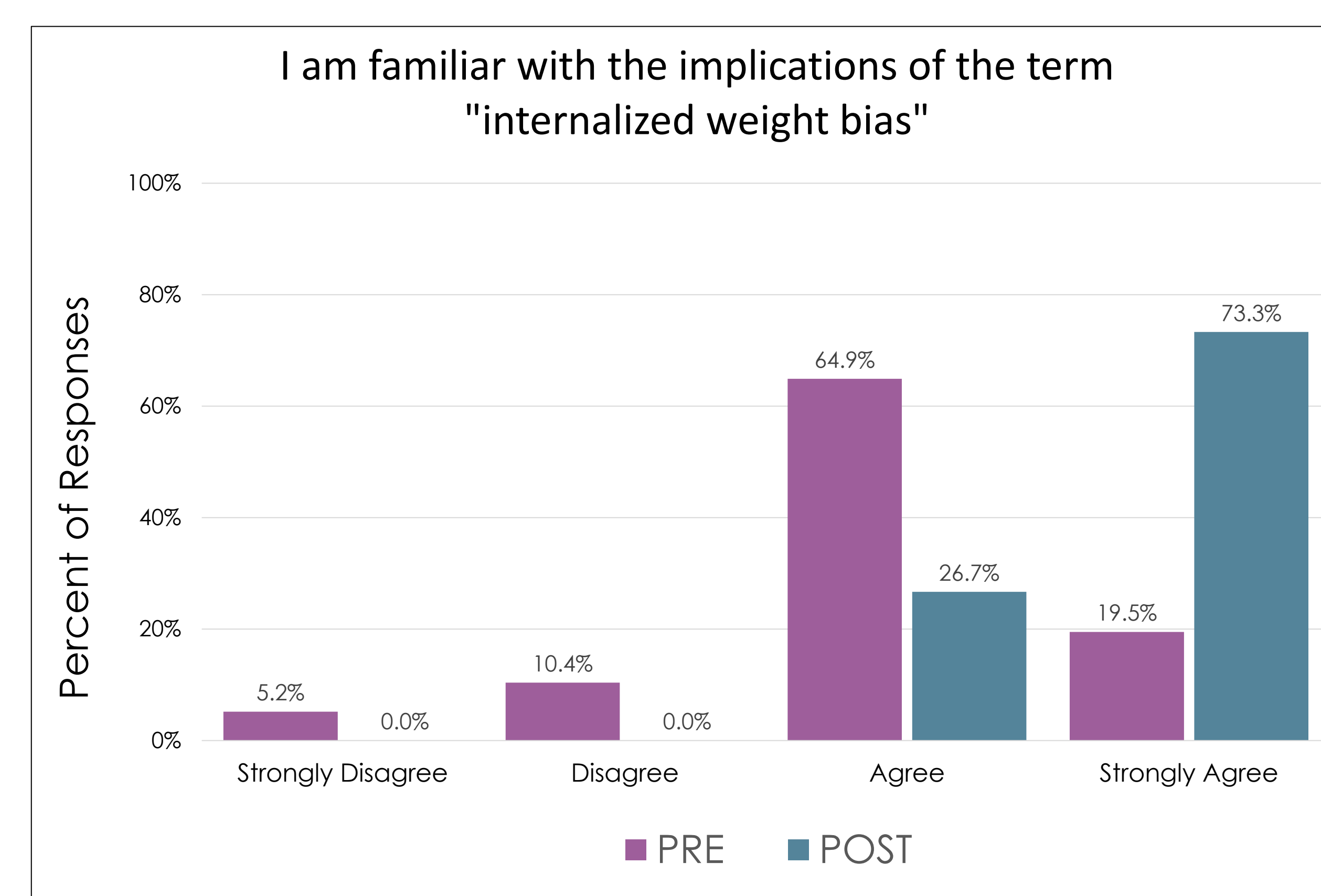
Objective/Purpose

- Define types of weight bias to include experienced - implicit, explicit and Internalization of weight bias.
- Apply guidelines and recommendations from the (AACE) to address patient-related outcomes and risk of adiposity.
- Obtain updated information for educating around the topic of obesity bias, including internalization of weight bias

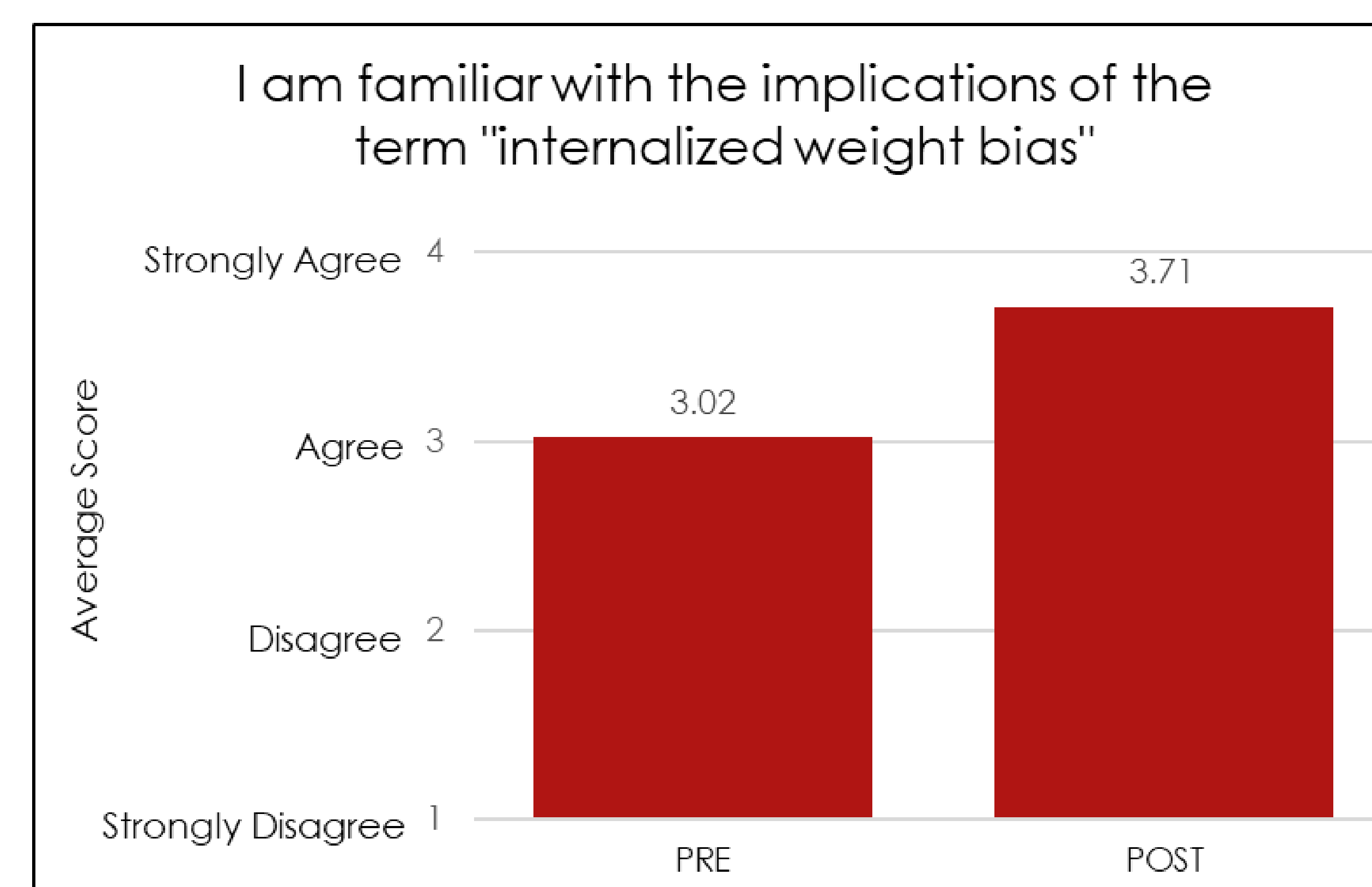
Methods

- A pre-survey was done prior to the educational module on introduction and implications of the term "Internalization of weight bias" followed by post-survey.
- 6 cohorts of third-year medical students, with both pre and post-survey responses from 42 students.
- The pre and post-survey consisted of the statement: "I am familiar with the implications of the term internalization of weight bias" strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree and quantified using the 1-4 scale.
- The average score on the 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree) scale increased significantly from Pre (Mean=3.07, SD=.6) to Post (Mean=3.64, SD=.5) (p=0.04).

Results



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
PRE (#, %)	3 (7.1%)	5 (11.9%)	22 (52.4%)	12 (28.6%)	42 (100%)
POST (#, %)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (26.7%)	30 (73.3%)	42 (100%)



Discussion / Conclusion / Future Directions

- Current rates of weight gain impact 70% of the US population and the brunt of the obesity epidemic will continue to be increasingly borne by primary care providers.
- The AACE recently revised the diagnosis of obesity using adiposity-based chronic disease (ABCD) nomenclature and staging adding weight stigma, and internalized weight bias (IWB) and published a practical and actionable guidance to aid clinicians in mitigating IWB and stigma in that context.
- Weight stigma and internalized bias are both drivers and complications of ABCD and can impair quality of life and predispose individuals to psychological distress.
- The need for further education is evident, and nearly all educators and learners are likely to benefit by being aware of these recent recommendations.
- Our study indicates that medical education can be undertaken to introduce these terms with a family medicine clerkship to begin the conversation about obesity bias of all kinds.

References



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