

# Put your employee benefit decisions to work

## The first step toward employee health and wellness

You've chosen to cover anti-obesity medications because you recognize the impact they could have on your company and your employees' health. As you know, addressing obesity is important because:

- Obesity is associated with increased employee sick days, disability claims, and health care costs<sup>1</sup>
- A 5% or greater weight loss has been shown to increase productivity in employees with obesity<sup>2</sup>
- The FDA has approved various pharmacotherapies for chronic weight management in conjunction with diet and exercise<sup>3-7</sup>

## The next step: Tell them they're covered

There's a good chance your employees (and their providers) don't know they are covered for anti-obesity medications as part of your benefit offering. It's important to communicate the availability of anti-obesity medications to maximize your investment in support of employee health. Take extra steps today to notify them of the benefits you provide.

**Communicate your plan offerings to health care providers and health systems. Consider using the 2 letter templates as examples, attached for your reference.**

1. **Letter to Health Care Providers from Employees:** Have your employees bring this letter to their health care providers as a notification that they are covered under your benefit plan and have access to anti-obesity medications. The template emphasizes your commitment to helping your employees achieve their health and wellness goals, and that health care providers play a key role.

Follow these easy steps to assist your employees in communicating with their providers:

- Use the template as a guide and feel free to adapt the content to suit your needs
- Place the letter on your own company letterhead
- Give the letter to your employees to take to their health care providers

2. **Letter to Health Systems:** Use this letter to notify local health systems that anti-obesity medications are now covered for your employees. It's important to alert local health systems to the positive actions taken by your employees to improve their health. This communication will help to ensure that the medications your employees may need are made available to them.

Follow these easy steps to communicate with local health systems:

- Use the template as a guide and feel free to adapt the content to suit your needs
- Place the letter on your own company letterhead
- In addition to sending the letter, you may want to arrange a meeting with health system leadership to discuss what you can do together to benefit employees

Thank you for supporting your employees' efforts toward better health and wellness.

## References

1. Hammond RA, Levine R. The economic impact of obesity in the United States. *Diabetes Metab Syndr Obes.* 2010;3:285-295.
2. Bilger M, Finkelstein EA, Kruger E, Tate DF, Linnan LA. The effect of weight loss on health, productivity, and medical expenditures among overweight employees. *Med Care.* 2013;51(6):471-477.
3. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves Belviq to treat some overweight or obese adults [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm309993.htm>. Published June 27, 2012. Accessed May 16, 2016.
4. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves weight-management drug Qsymia [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm312468.htm>. Published July 17, 2012. Accessed May 16, 2016.
5. US Food and Drug Administration. Orlistat (marketed as Alli and Xenical) information. <http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/PostmarketDrugSafetyInformationforPatientsandProviders/ucm180076.htm>. Updated July 8, 2015. Accessed May 16, 2016.
6. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves weight-management drug Contrave [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm413896.htm>. Published September 10, 2014. Accessed May 16, 2016.
7. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves weight-management drug Saxenda [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm427913.htm>. Published December 23, 2014. Accessed August 16, 2016.

## Example Letter for Health Care Providers: Notify them of the opportunity to maximize support for your employees

Use this example letter as a guide to encourage health care providers (HCPs) to support your employees who are taking an active role in pursuing their health and lifestyle goals. Your employees can deliver this communication to their HCPs.

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Dear Dr. [Name of HCP],

[Name of patient], an employee of [Company], has taken the next step in [his/her] commitment toward a healthy lifestyle by taking advantage of the obesity and weight management resources offered through our company. Your patient has enrolled in [Insert program name], which includes:

- [Insert program specifics]

Along with wellness programs, anti-obesity medications may form a critical component of [Name of patient]'s comprehensive weight management plan.

**We have ensured that anti-obesity medications are included on our health plan formulary.** At your discretion, you may want to consider prescribing one of the following anti-obesity medications that are covered under [Name of patient]'s health plan:

- [Insert covered anti-obesity medication brand names]

We are committed to comprehensive weight management for our employees, because:

- Obesity is associated with increased employee sick days, disability claims, and health care costs<sup>1</sup>
- A 5% or greater weight loss has been shown to increase productivity in employees with obesity<sup>2</sup>
- The FDA has approved various pharmacotherapies for chronic weight management in conjunction with diet and exercise<sup>3-7</sup>

By combining your clinical expertise with weight management resources, including anti-obesity medications, we can work together to help [Name of patient] achieve [his/her] health and lifestyle goals.

Sincerely,

[Name/Title/Department]

**References:** 1. Hammond RA, Levine R. The economic impact of obesity in the United States. *Diabetes Metab Syndr Obes.* 2010;3:285-295. 2. Bilger M, Finkelstein EA, Kruger E, Tate DF, Linnan LA. The effect of weight loss on health, productivity, and medical expenditures among overweight employees. *Med Care.* 2013;51(6):471-477. 3. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves Belviq to treat some overweight or obese adults [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm309993.htm>. Published June 27, 2012. Accessed May 16, 2016. 4. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves weight-management drug Qsymia [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm312468.htm>. Published July 17, 2012. Accessed May 16, 2016. 5. US Food and Drug Administration. Orlistat (marketed as Alli and Xenical) information. <http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/PostmarketDrugSafetyInformationforPatientsandProviders/ucm180076.htm>. Updated July 8, 2015. Accessed May 16, 2016. 6. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves weight-management drug Contrave [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm413896.htm>. Published September 10, 2014. Accessed May 16, 2016. 7. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves weight-management drug Saxenda [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm427913.htm>. Published December 23, 2014. Accessed August 16, 2016.

## Example Letter for Local Health Systems: Notify them of the benefits you offer your employees

Use this example letter as a guide to notify local health systems of the steps your employees are taking to improve their health through weight management programs. Discuss the importance of utilizing the benefits you provide your employees, and suggest forming a partnership to see what you can accomplish in addressing obesity together.

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Dear [Name],

Helping our employees at [Company] to achieve their health and lifestyle goals is a top priority. Network providers in your health system see many of our employees, and we view this as a great opportunity to form a partnership to improve the health of our employees and your patients. Our employees are taking advantage of the obesity and weight management resources offered through our company, which include:

- [Insert resource names]

Along with these resources, anti-obesity medications may form a critical component of their comprehensive weight management plan.

**We have ensured that anti-obesity medications are included on our health plan formulary** and wanted to notify you as well. Please consider the following medication(s) for employees of [Company]:

- [Insert covered anti-obesity medication brand names]

We are committed to comprehensive weight management for our employees, because:

- Obesity is associated with increased employee sick days, disability claims, and health care costs<sup>1</sup>
- A 5% or greater weight loss has been shown to increase productivity in employees with obesity<sup>2</sup>
- The FDA has approved various pharmacotherapies for chronic weight management in conjunction with diet and exercise<sup>3-7</sup>

By combining your clinical expertise with weight management resources, including anti-obesity medications, we can jointly help your patients achieve their health and lifestyle goals. We would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss what we can do together to benefit our employees within your network.

If you are interested, please contact us at [Phone number/email address].

Sincerely,

[Name/Title/Department]

**References:** 1. Hammond RA, Levine R. The economic impact of obesity in the United States. *Diabetes Metab Syndr Obes*. 2010;3:285-295. 2. Bilger M, Finkelstein EA, Kruger E, Tate DF, Linnan LA. The effect of weight loss on health, productivity, and medical expenditures among overweight employees. *Med Care*. 2013;51(6):471-477. 3. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves Belviq to treat some overweight or obese adults [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm309993.htm>. Published June 27, 2012. Accessed May 16, 2016. 4. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves weight-management drug Qsymia [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm312468.htm>. Published July 17, 2012. Accessed May 16, 2016. 5. US Food and Drug Administration. Orlistat (marketed as Alli and Xenical) information. <http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/PostmarketDrugSafetyInformationforPatientsandProviders/ucm180076.htm>. Updated July 8, 2015. Accessed May 16, 2016. 6. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves weight-management drug Contrave [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm413896.htm>. Published September 10, 2014. Accessed May 16, 2016. 7. US Food and Drug Administration. FDA approves weight-management drug Saxenda [press release]. <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm427913.htm>. Published December 23, 2014. Accessed August 16, 2016.