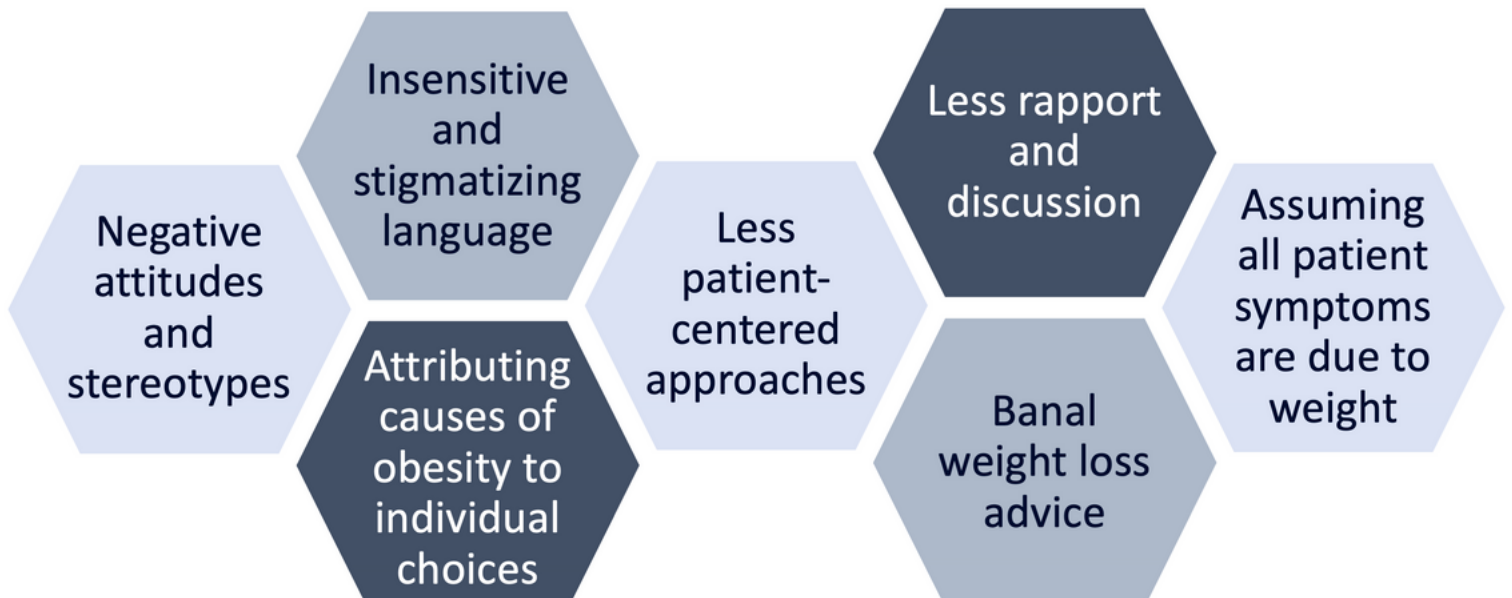


HOW DOES WEIGHT STIGMA AFFECT PATIENT CARE?

Weight stigma can be present in the medical setting. Healthcare professionals are not immune to societal weight stigma, and some providers express weight-biased attitudes and stereotypes toward patients with higher weight. This includes stereotypes that patients with higher weight are lazy, lack motivation and willpower, have poor self-control, have poor self-management behaviors, are at fault for their weight, and are less compliant with treatment. Evidence suggests that patients are aware of biased attitudes in healthcare, and many report being stigmatized about their weight by doctors and other healthcare professionals.

Stigmatizing communication

Professional weight bias can translate into poor communication with patients. Patients with higher weight perceive weight stigma in multiple aspects of clinician communication and counseling. Common examples include the following:



Relevant Published Research Citations

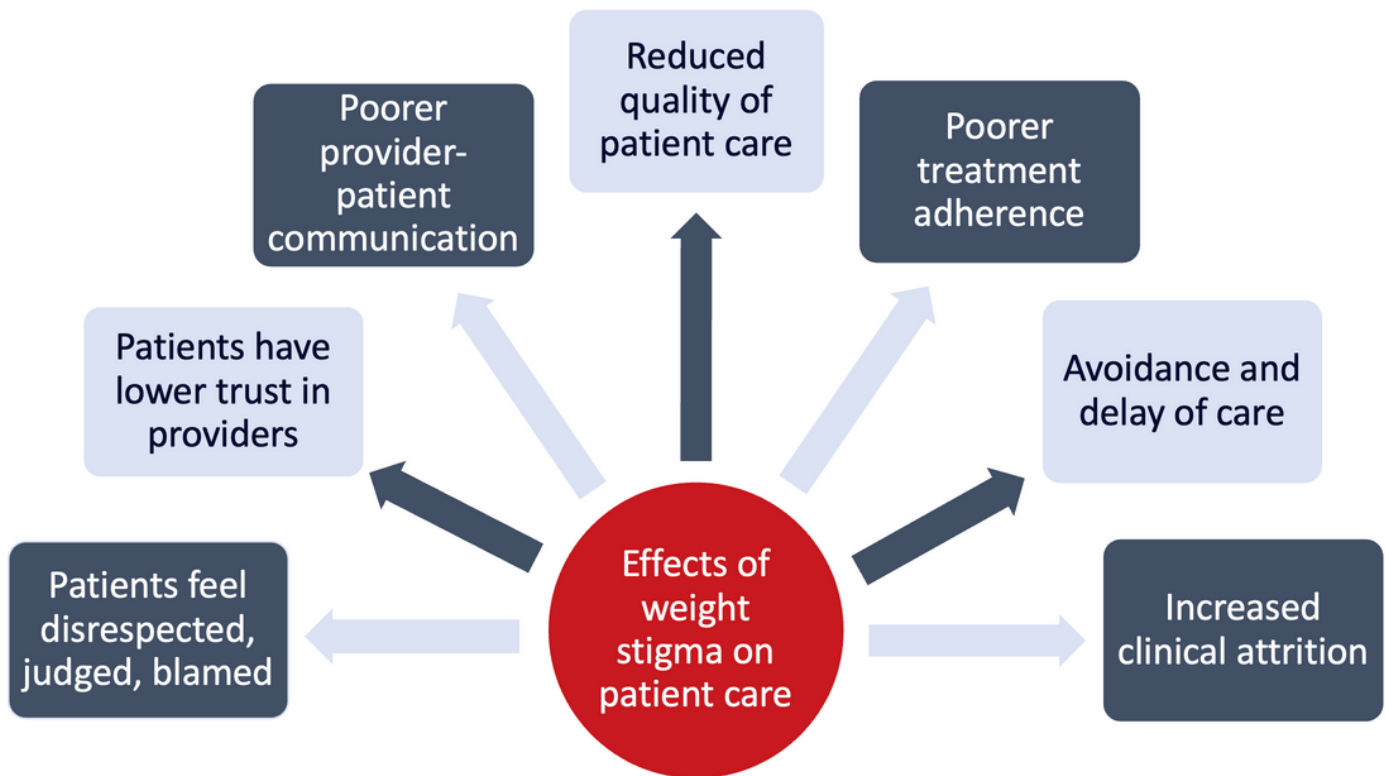
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Weight stigma creates barriers in patient care

Patient reports of weight stigma from healthcare professionals commonly include feeling judged or shamed because of their weight, receiving disrespectful or insulting comments, and a general lack of compassion during healthcare visits.

Not surprisingly, these experiences can lead to lower trust in healthcare professionals, poorer communication, and reduced quality of care. Increasing evidence also shows that weight stigma contributes to lower treatment adherence, delay and avoidance of healthcare, and increased clinical attrition.



Weight stigma creates multiple barriers for effective patient care. To reduce weight stigma in healthcare, improving clinician-patient communication is essential. Through increased self-awareness and education about weight stigma, respectful language, supportive counseling, and patient-centered approaches, healthcare professionals can deliver more compassionate and effective clinical care.

Relevant Published Research Citations

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