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ASAP Welcomes Zepbound® as New Option for Treating OSA

ASAP applauds innovation in sleep apnea treatments, notes importance of patient access, and urges caution over "copycat" versions

In a statement following the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's recent approval of Zepbound (tirzepatide) for the treatment of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), the Alliance of Sleep Apnea Partners noted that the arrival of a new treatment option is helpful for patients and their doctors.

The FDA approval in late 2024 made the drug the first and only prescription medicine for adult patients with obesity who are living with moderate to severe OSA. The drug is produced by the Eli Lilly pharmaceutical company.



"We applaud Eli Lilly's latest success with tirzepatide, paving the way for the first-ever pharmaceutical treatment for OSA in obese patients," ASAP Chief Executive Officer Monica Mallampalli, PhD, said. "ASAP supports

the concept of the right treatment for the right patients. Having access to multiple treatment options that work effectively for patients, whether used as standalone therapy or in combination with other therapies, is the first step to personalized care."

Some "copycat" drugs from compounding pharmacies also have appeared on the market. In an [op-ed](#) for the digital publication Sleep Review, Mallampalli and co-author Surya Padmanabhan also noted that drugs produced by compounding pharmacies are not verified by the FDA for safety, effectiveness or quality.

Since FDA's approval of Zepbound as a treatment for OSA in patients with obesity, Eli Lilly also has launched several programs and resources for patients. ASAP also has an array of free resources. ASAP is listed among Eli Lilly's patient resources [here](#).

- Read more about a range of OSA treatments [here](#) on ASAP's [website](#).
- [Learn about Eli Lilly's decision to release additional vial doses and offer savings for patients in the company's self-pay program.](#)
- [Take Eli Lilly's survey about sleep apnea symptoms.](#)

To learn more about OSA treatment options, check out ASAP's patient and caregiver resources, including [free resources](#) for women, for [talking to your doctor](#), and more.

Learn More
Now

Raise Your Voice! ASAP's New Advocacy Toolkit Empowers Patients to Help Improve CPAP Safety



In the wake of the [Philips Respironics positive airway pressure \(PAP\) machine recall](#), many patients realized the need for policy change to help ensure that any future recall won't put patients in harm's way again.

In response, ASAP created "[Raise Your Voice: An Advocacy Toolkit for Patients Affected by the Philips Respironics Recall](#)" to empower patients to tell their stories and advocate for change that prioritizes patient care.

The toolkit features a step-by-step guide for finding, contacting, and communicating with your elected officials in Washington, D.C. It also includes handy communication templates and best practices to help your story reach your Representative or Senator. And it provides key messages around ASAP's two advocacy priorities:

- **Creating a centralized national registry for tracking respiratory devices will help healthcare providers, device manufacturers, and durable medical equipment providers notify patients about a recall faster.** That can help prevent illness or injury, treatment disruptions, and even deaths. We urge members of Congress to hold a hearing on the need for a national registry and involve patient voices from those affected by the Philips recall.

- Requiring automatic subrogation for insurance claims related to recalled respiratory devices will remove a substantial financial burden from patients and allow them to receive a replacement device outside their insurers' normal replacement cycle. This will allow patients to continue safe care without having to pay an unexpected out of pocket cost for a new machine.

The toolkit follows ASAP's publication of a related white paper, "[The Philips Respironics Recall: Shaping Policy for Better Patient Outcomes](#)" and "[Breathing Easier](#)," a series of panel discussions about the recall from a variety of perspectives. The series is available for free on the ASAP's YouTube channel ([@ApneaPartners](#)).

The advocacy toolkit, white paper, and video discussions were made possible through a generous grant from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine Foundation.

Read or Download the
Toolkit

Save the Date: Sleep Apnea Education Week is April 18-26

Sleep Apnea Education Week is back! The 2025 campaign will feature educational and interactive social media posts, online discussions, and interviews to raise awareness of sleep apnea's impact--on individual patient's lives and on society as a whole.

We'll be providing a social media toolkit so ASAP supporters, patients and caregivers, and our other organizational friends can participate. Keep your eye out for **#SleepApneaEducationWeek** resources and share your sleep apnea story with us, too.



Learn More About
#SAEW

Share Your
Story

ASAP Signs On to Obesity Action Letter

ASAP joined nearly 70 other organizations this month calling on America's employers to support obesity care coverage in their health plans.

Led by the Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention and EveryBODY Covered, the groups published an open letter asking employers to ensure that obesity, like any other



Obesity care should be covered like any other chronic disease—it's only fair

To America's Employers,

Led by the EveryBODY Covered campaign and the Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention, we are writing to ask for your support in ensuring that obesity is covered by your health plans just like any other chronic disease.

For many years, obesity has been recognized as a chronic, treatable disease with many causes, including some outside of one's control. Fortunately, many employers are making significant investments in supporting employees living with obesity. We want to see that momentum continue for all employees across America.

Comprehensive obesity coverage should include the full range of evidence-based obesity care options, including medical nutrition therapy, intensive behavioral therapy, bariatric surgery and FDA-approved medications.

Obesity has a significant impact on women—particularly women of color—across every stage of life.

- The disease is associated with over 200 serious health complications, such as sleep apnea, heart disease and diabetes, as well as those that especially impact women, such as breast cancer and fertility issues.^{1,2}
- Women living with obesity are often stigmatized by coworkers, less likely to be promoted and earn as much as 12% less than their colleagues.^{3,4}

The status quo must change.

When coverage for obesity care isn't available, patients are left to seek less safe alternatives or forgo treatment all together. Employers are financially impacted when obesity is left untreated—obesity costs employers approximately \$425.5 billion annually.⁵ Covering obesity care also has the potential to help reduce costs through reduced absenteeism, increased productivity and a healthier workforce.⁶

The EveryBODY Covered campaign encourages employers to prioritize obesity within workplace healthcare and equity strategies by:

- 1 Recognizing obesity as a chronic disease with causes that include those outside of an individual's control.
- 2 Reviewing your benefits offerings for opportunities to better support obesity care for your employees and communicate coverage as a priority to your benefits administrators.
- 3 Working against weight bias at every level of your company and making sure that this is demonstrated through your company's culture.

We appreciate employers' tireless commitment to employee health and hope you will answer the call to better support employees living with obesity in the workplace.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Women's Health and Prevention
 Almed Alliance
 Alliance for Aging Research
 Alliance for Patient Access
 Alliance of Sleep Apnea Partners Centers
 American Association of Birth Practitioners
 American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
 American College of Physicians
 American Kidney Fund
 American Medical Women's Association
 American Nurses Association
 American Psychological Association
 American Public Health Association
 American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery
 American Society of Preventive Cardiology

Association of Black Cardiologists
 Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
 Arthritis Foundation
 BlackDoctor.org
 Black Women's Health Imperative
 Black Women for Change
 Bone Health and Osteoporosis Foundation
 Brain Foundation to Defeat Breast Cancer
 Caregiver Action Network
 Center for Patient Advocacy Leaders
 Care of Gastrointestinal Diseases
 ConscientHealth
 Creating Healthier Communities
 DiabetesSisters
 Diabetes Leadership Council
 Diabetes Patient Advocacy Coalition
 Gerontological Society of America
 Global Liver Institute

GO2 for Lung Cancer
 Helen Meadley Collective
 Health Equity Coalition for Chronic Disease
 HealthyWomen
 Heart Sistas Inc.
 MANA, A National Latina Organization
 The Mended Hearts, Inc.
 National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions
 National Association of Hispanic Nurses
 National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
 National Black Nurses Association
 National Caucus and Center on Black Aging
 National Consumers League
 National Council on Aging
 National Grange
 National Hispanic Council on Aging
 National Hispanic Health Foundation

National Medical Association
 National Menopause Foundation
 National Rural Health Association
 National Student Nurses' Association
 Obesity Action Coalition
 Obesity Care Advocacy Network
 Obesity Medicine Association
 Obesity Medicine Fellowship Council
 Partnership to Advance Cardiovascular Health
 Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease
 Prostate Cancer Foundation
 Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association
 RetireSafe
 Society for Women's Health Research
 The Obesity Society
 TQCH: The Black Breast Cancer Alliance
 WomenHeart



Scan here for more information or visit everybodycovered.org/employers

chronic disease, is covered in healthcare plans offered to their employees.

Obesity and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) can form a vicious cycle: excess weight make OSA worse, and OSA can contribute to weight gain. Both diseases also can increase risks of such problems as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, metabolic syndrome, and more.

Obesity, especially around the neck and abdomen, is the strongest risk factor for OSA for both men and women. The letter noted the connection between obesity and sleep apnea, among more than 200 other serious health complications.

The letter also urged employers to work against weight bias and to recognize obesity as a chronic disease.

ASAP Boosted Awareness in March

March is National Sleep Month, and ASAP has been actively participating in efforts to get word out about how sleep affects health—and specifically the role of sleep apnea in disease, accidents, and poor quality of life.

On March 12, ASAP contributed as a U.S. delegate to the Global Awareness of Sleep Apnea campaign, which unites sleep apnea patient groups from around the world. ASAP also was a U.S. delegate for World Sleep Day on March 14.

POPULATION The impact of sleep apnea is underestimated and the condition is often not adequately treated. This means that about 936 million adults and 500 million children suffer from it worldwide, but only 5% of these are diagnosed and receive therapeutic treatment.

Logos for World Sleep Day, GASP, and various partner organizations like ASP, opnewsleeping, FFAIR, ELF, and Caribbean Sleep Disorders are shown at the bottom.

Learn More About GASP

POLICY NOTES

ASAP Supports Proposed CMS Coverage Expansion to Include Anti-Obesity Medications

In December 2024, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services



proposed a rule that would expand coverage of anti-obesity medications under Medicare and Medicaid.

ASAP supports this rule, which would increase patient access. Read more about ASAP's support on the [news page](#) at [apneapartners.org](#).

Under the proposed rule published on Dec. 10, 2024, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services would broaden access to millions of patients struggling with challenges associated with obesity and obstructive sleep apnea.

More information on the CMS proposed rule can be found [here](#) (pages 99375 and 99518).

To read other comment letters submitted by ASAP, visit the [Policy Engagement page](#) under the Advocacy tab on [apneapartners.org](#).

Read the Proposed Rule

ASAP NEWS

Arneaud, Chaudhari, and Ward join ASAP Board

This month the ASAP board welcomed three new members: Gregory Arneaud, founder of ISD Health Solutions; Monica Chaudhari, CEO of the AdirA digital health company; and Mallory Ward, a strategic communications and public affairs professional with global experience.



Gregory Arneaud has more than 25 years' experience as a certified respiratory therapist in sleep medicine. He is the founder and clinical director of ISD Health Solutions, a leading Caribbean company for sleep apnea and insomnia services and solutions. He also is founder of the Caribbean Sleep Disorders Association and is the author of "The Wake Up Call: How You Sleep Is



Monica Chaudhari founded AdirA, a platform that helps women be the Chief Wellness Officers of their families. Prior to establishing AdirA, she worked for three decades in the pharmaceutical industry. Her leadership roles included serving as Associate Vice-President of Women's Health and General Medicine at Merck. A vocal advocate for women's health and



Mallory Ward is a strategic communications professional with 20 years' experience of working with clients on messaging strategy, crisis communications, thought leadership, and public affairs campaigns. The founder of Mallory Ward Communications, she also is Executive Vice-President at Reservoir Communications Group, where she works with

How You Live." He previously has served on the board of the American Sleep Apnea Association.

gender equality, she identifies more convenient and reliable options of sleep apnea diagnosis and treatments as a priority.

clients across health care. She also was a director at APCO Worldwide, a global public affairs and strategic communications firm.

[Read the Announcement](#)

ASAP Urges Practitioners and Patients to Be Cautious of Compounded Versions of Zepbound

When the Food and Drug Administration declared a shortage of tirzepatide within months of its approval, that set the stage for compounding pharmacies to make "copycat" versions of the popular the weight-loss drug that Eli Lilly markets as Zepbound.

But tirzepatide copycats, which do not undergo the FDA's rigorous review process, have safety implications for patients seeking treatment for obstructive sleep apnea.

The shortage officially ended last October and the FDA deadlines for online and retail pharmacies to sell copycats version have now passed. But some OSA patients might still seek compounded tirzepatide. ASAP Chief Executive Officer Monica Mallampalli co-authored an article with Surya Padmanabhan in "Sleep Review" this month describing the issue and the importance of education around the risks and benefits of medications from compounding pharmacies.

[Read the Story](#)

The Truth About Women's Sleep: ASAP CEO Mallampalli Discusses Hidden Crisis on Podcast



MARCH 12 · S6 E7 · 30 MIN

Unmasking the Hidden Health Crisis: Dr. Monica Mallampalli Exposes the Truth About Women's Sleep
Sleep is My Waking Passion

[▶ Play](#)



Monica Mallampalli, PhD, ASAP's Chief Executive Officer, visited the "Sleep Is My Waking Passion" podcast to discuss the challenges women face in getting proper healthcare—including her own sleep apnea's initial misdiagnosis.

Until 1993, women were not included in biomedical research, which has led to significant gaps in the broader understanding of their health needs. Mallampalli discusses the importance of raising awareness about the sleep health disparities women face. She also recalls her own journey to diagnosis, as well as her inspiring path from bench research to energetic advocacy for sleep apnea patients and for women's health.

Mallampalli also discusses how sleep disorders in women can masquerade as anxiety or depression, how women can recognize their symptoms, and the resources that can help them navigate sleep apnea and the healthcare system to find treatment and improve their quality of life.

Listen to the
Podcast

ASAP Brings Women's Sleep Health Concerns to Capitol Hill Briefing



The Alliance of Sleep Apnea Partners is raising awareness about women's specific sleep health issues and needs, all the way to the halls of Congress.

ASAP Chief Executive Officer Monica Mallampalli, PhD, represented the organization at the American Academy of Sleep Medicine's March 5 briefing, Sleep Health in Women, on Capitol Hill. As part of the day's events, she gave a presentation titled "Women and Sleep: Shining a Spotlight on Unmet Needs."

ASAP's Redline Named Editor of National Sleep Foundation's award-winning Sleep Health

The National Sleep Foundation has announced Susan Redline, MD, MPH, as the next editor-in-chief of its journal, Sleep Health. A distinguished leader in sleep health research, Dr. Redline is a founding member and current board member of the Alliance of Sleep Apnea Partners.

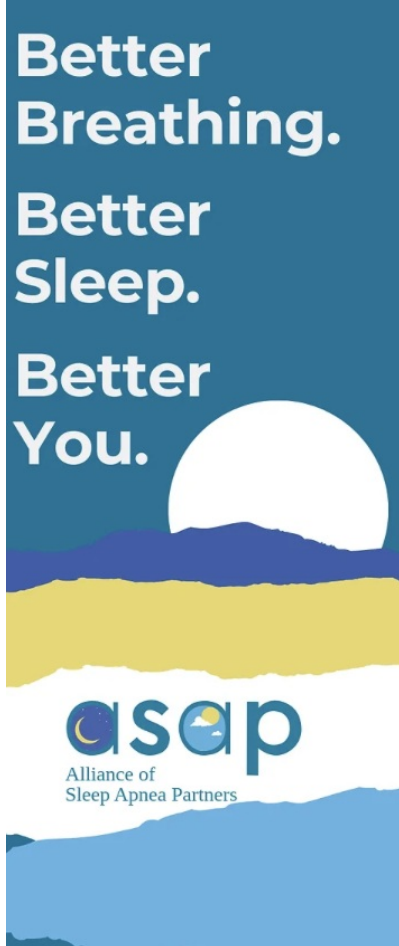
She is the Peter C. Farrell Professor of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Director of the Programs in Sleep and Cardiovascular Medicine and Sleep Medicine Epidemiology at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

A sleep medicine physician, she has led many national research projects aiming to understand the causes and consequences of sleep apnea. She also has led clinical trials addressing the role of sleep apnea interventions in improving health, cognition, and behavior in children and adults.



Help ASAP's Patient Advocacy Mission

The Alliance of Sleep Apnea Partners is a



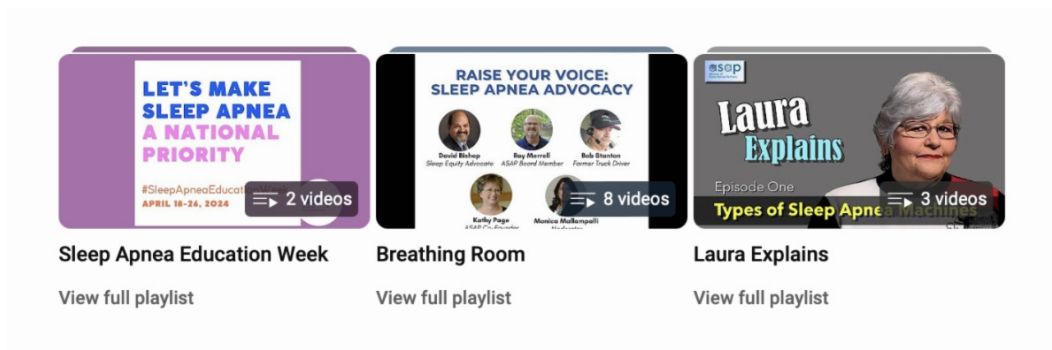
patient-centered 501(c)(3) nonprofit working to ensure not only that patient voices are heard, but that health care policies benefit patients and improve their health outcomes.

We're dedicated to serving those living with sleep-disordered breathing or who have been diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea. We strive to represent diverse patient voices at the local, regional, and national levels through education, advocacy, and support to eliminate gaps in patient care.

Your donation helps ASAP carry out this work to create a brighter future for everyone living with sleep apnea.

[DONATE TO ASAP](#)

Explore ASAP and Our Resources Online



Stay up to date with Alliance of Sleep Apnea Partners news, webinars, and social media on all of ASAP's online channels. Bookmark our website and follow us on social!

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- Facebook: [@ApneaPartners](https://www.facebook.com/ApneaPartners)
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We Want to Hear From You!

Do you have questions or concerns about sleep apnea? Do you have a sleep apnea story to share?



Email ASAP and let us know!

Email ASAP



Alliance of Sleep Apnea Partners | 10045 Baltimore National Pike Ste A7 #1 | Ellicott City, MD 21042 US

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