

# FAT ACTIVISM & HAES®

Advocating for Ourselves & Our Clients in  
Healthcare Spaces



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**All blank pages have been removed, and some notes have been enlarged for easier viewing. No other edits were made.**

**Breakout Session 2:  
Brainstorming/practicing responses to anti-fatness in healthcare settings.**

# BIPOC Affinity Room

**1. Patient in doctor's office - A few of us shared our own personal experiences. It's a privilege to role play when this is our real life.**

**1. Patient in doctor's office - A few of us shared our own personal experiences. It's a privilege to be able to "role play" when this is our real life.**

**Going to doctor's office with someone who can help advocate for us can help strengthen our own ability to self-advocate**

**Fighting against fat discrimination in the dating world.  
Continuing to defend my partners who are in fat bodies and reminding others of their own fat phobia in picking partners.**

**Sometimes have to go to multiple doctors to advocate for necessary care**

**Set precedent with provider that discussion about weight is not an option. Also, communicate to provider that if that is an issue, will find another provider**

**Refusing to be weighed often "breaks people's brains"**

**Making a list of questions to ask/things to say before going to the doctor's office**



# Disabled Affinity Room

The way weight is evaluated in health care is the same way it's evaluated in society.

Request respectful weighing. Focus on my weight (which is not a factor under my personal choice), it generates stress and that damages my health. It can also trigger conducts.

**We use humor!**

**Sometimes just a chipping away becomes cumulative.**

**Ensure accessibility in SAE clinic.**

talking about weight as it is as a problem to be solved perpetuates the stigma of weight and estress (a serious risk factor for diseases)

**Promote self-care behaviors regardless of body size**

Focusing on weight promote disordered eating behaviors as a food restriction

I do a boatload of research before I interact with a medical provider so I can prepare myself for any crap they might throw my way.

Talking about bad effect of the number on the scale. 1) It does not determine health or value as a human being. Patients, all, deserve to inhabit our body feeling safe.

**I often give or send NAAFA or other fat-neutral health-related literature to the MD. Especially if I'm doing well medically. I also**

The only medical provider I don't fear is my dermatologist.

Weighing the patient consent. It 'is necessary' considering silent/discreet weight, but really the best option for most is not weighing at all.

A doctor's perception of their client's attractiveness impacts how they treat them. Even as far as desexualizing Superfat and disabled people.

**Interrupt the system at the pediatrician. Take money back from the diet industry.**

**Talking about the importance of deconstruct and heal our thoughts with prejudices around a weight gain. Gaining weight is not a failure, losing weight is not a success.**

**Why do we give height when we aren't giving weight?**

Measurements are arbitrary and social constructs.

Acknowledging our privileges.

**I've commented on seating in medical offices**

# Room 5 (healthcare worker in online forum)

**pushing back  
against the  
conflation of  
thinness/health**

**challenging  
assumptions that  
symptoms are  
related to weight  
and advocating for  
thorough testing**

**prioritizing agency -  
letting the client  
decide the degree  
to which they want  
to focus on health**

**levelling the power  
dynamics as much  
as is possible (client  
is expert of their  
own life)**

**creating resources  
for fellow  
professionals to  
check on their own  
time - linking to  
research so that  
they can do their  
own work**

**acknowledging the  
harm that has been  
done in traditional  
medical  
environments**

**what would  
you say to a  
thin person?**

**work in implicit bias  
and question how  
internalized  
antifatness  
contributes to how  
you treat clients**

# Room 6

healthcare providers have an ethical duty to call out/in; call other providers and confront

**Educate co-workers, other providers**

On the provider end, partnering with clients/patients to create inclusive spaces, and advocating for humanizing changes

Sometimes I don't know what I need: not knowing whether certain accommodations exist - if people are working with equipment all the time, know mods and tell people

**know weight limits of equipment**

**Vet partners to make sure they're size inclusive - be ahead of clients**

You might be surprised how they may respond! They may make other small changes to make you more comfortable

The more we ask, the easier it gets for the next person

**Don't just ask, but EXPECT**

**Practice makes it easier**

Ask for seat belt extender as soon as you get on plane...maybe attendants will find you a more comfortable seat

**Self-advocate for making space for yourself...which can take a lot of mental preparation**

Provider may be focused on their tasks, speaking up is helpful

Establish with provider that you're not considering weight loss surgery, etc. - set boundaries

Remind yourself people with thinner bodies may not think twice about asking what you need

**Ask for two soaking buckets for your pedicure!**

Take steps to be SEEN instead of trying to blend in (may be harder in medical spaces)



# Room 7

**maybe write a  
letter to the  
provider**

**Ask questions of  
your physicians, ie.  
what is the 5 year  
outcome of this or  
that "weight loss"  
technique? Can help  
confront fatphobic  
providers.**

**Boldly request  
your provider  
NOT ask about  
weight loss  
surgery or  
medications.**

# Room 8

lived  
experience  
is just as  
important  
as  
"research"

having an  
"elevator  
pitch" for a  
one liner to  
disrupt anti-  
fatness in  
action

responding with kindness, and  
encouraging peers/colleagues/  
co-workers to consider these  
other frameworks: HAES and Fat  
Liberation

using discretion  
when listening to  
"experts" on eating  
disorders, i.e. NEDA  
is in cahoots with  
anti-ob\*sity  
campaigns/IWL.

# Room 9

**How are we  
advocating for  
ourselves?**

**How are  
others  
advocating on  
our behalf**

**Are medical  
procedures  
designed for  
all bodies?**

**Science,  
Medicine, and  
Oppression**

**Consent,  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS**

**Building  
connection!  
Allies**

**Financial  
Considerations:  
insurance, travel for  
services**

**Life and death  
considerations! This  
is about human life**

**Education,  
Resources -  
knowledge is  
power**

**HOW are we  
teaching our  
experts to be  
experts?**

**Adding fat  
liberationist  
folks to  
Advanced  
Directives**

**Educating fat  
folks on their  
rights and  
that they can  
say no!**

**Call in those  
favors - it's  
your health  
and you  
deserve good  
treatment.**



# Breakout Session

Role play examples

**'Client', please, not  
'patient'  
(anti-oppressive  
language)**

1. Patient in doctor's office
2. Dietitian advocating for patient in interdisciplinary team meeting
3. Doctor trying to change hospital policy around BMI usage
4. Community organizer trying to change healthcare policy
5. Health worker in an online forum or on a social media app speaking with other health professionals who are complaining about how hard it is to handle fat patients

### RTB Resources - BI-LatinX

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1a8Jal-WZQV9Ra7Oigb\\_1z77IUWFUW\\_DDQD-nbFgyBXo/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1a8Jal-WZQV9Ra7Oigb_1z77IUWFUW_DDQD-nbFgyBXo/edit)

### FA/HAES research

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17469900>

<http://thefeedingdoctor.com/lunch-box-back-off-note/>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4132299/>

<http://theysaidwhat.net/2016/01/24/overweight-johnson-johnsons-dream-is-your-worst-nightmare/>

<http://www.fatnutritionist.com/index.php/on-not-being-fed-enough-as-a-child/>

<https://danceswithfat.wordpress.com/blog/>

<https://medium.com/@thefatshadow/a-call-to-action-your-fat-friend-is-going-it-alone-38cb4bc70d0c#.s19j2y4iz>

<https://healthateverysizeblog.org/2016/04/14/the-haes-files-body-mass-index-is-not-a-good-measure-of-your-health/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H89QQfXtc-k>

<http://ellynsatterinstitute.org/htf/usingforbiddenfood.php>

<http://www.shiftn.com/obesity/Full-Map.html>

<http://wellroundedmama.blogspot.com/2017/07/obesity-and-joint-replacement-part-1.html>

<http://noelfigart.com/blog/2008/08/20/analysis-of-bmi/>

<http://www.fatnutritionist.com/index.php/worthless-foods/>

[https://academic.oup.com/jcem/article-abstract/doi/10.1210/jc.2017-00787/4093337/Change-in-weight-and-body-mass-index-associated?](https://academic.oup.com/jcem/article-abstract/doi/10.1210/jc.2017-00787/4093337/Change-in-weight-and-body-mass-index-associated?redirectedFrom=PDF)

[redirectedFrom=PDF](https://academic.oup.com/jcem/article-abstract/doi/10.1210/jc.2017-00787/4093337/Change-in-weight-and-body-mass-index-associated?redirectedFrom=PDF)

<https://healthateverysizeblog.org/2016/07/14/the-haes-files-there-is-no-social-justice-without-bodies/>

[https://broadly.vice.com/en\\_us/article/mb4e7n/how-to-treat-fat-people-ally-fatphobia](https://broadly.vice.com/en_us/article/mb4e7n/how-to-treat-fat-people-ally-fatphobia)

[https://asunow.asu.edu/20190129-discoveries-big-fat-lies-about-obesity?](https://asunow.asu.edu/20190129-discoveries-big-fat-lies-about-obesity?fbclid=IwAR0vo8xT07bGwpSETrlv4oXSAnRFLWXJld64PcbJcH-2Hq9pseh-yyCZy1c)

[fbclid=IwAR0vo8xT07bGwpSETrlv4oXSAnRFLWXJld64PcbJcH-2Hq9pseh-yyCZy1c](https://asunow.asu.edu/20190129-discoveries-big-fat-lies-about-obesity?fbclid=IwAR0vo8xT07bGwpSETrlv4oXSAnRFLWXJld64PcbJcH-2Hq9pseh-yyCZy1c)

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-racist-roots-of-fighting-obesity2/>

Weight Bias 101: [https://www.orchwa.org/resources/Documents/](https://www.orchwa.org/resources/Documents/Weight%20Bias%20and%20Health%20Equity%20for%20CHWs.pdf)

[Weight%20Bias%20and%20Health%20Equity%20for%20CHWs.pdf](https://www.orchwa.org/resources/Documents/Weight%20Bias%20and%20Health%20Equity%20for%20CHWs.pdf)

[https://elemental.medium.com/the-bizarre-and-racist-history-of-the-](https://elemental.medium.com/the-bizarre-and-racist-history-of-the-bmi-7d8dc2aa33bb)

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