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Letter to the Editor With Author's Response

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LETTER TO EDITOR

In their article, “Self-Monitoring Lifestyle Behavior in Overweight and Obese Pregnant Women” (*Clin Nurs Spec.* 32(2):81–89), Shieh and colleagues explored the experiences of pregnant women with overweight and obesity who monitored their eating and physical activity as a way to prevent excessive gestational weight gain. Throughout the article, people-first language was not incorporated because the study participants were continuously referred to as “overweight and obese pregnant women.” Labeling a person by their weight status dehumanizes them and contributes to weight bias.¹ Referring to individuals by their condition may cause them to think negatively about themselves and their health. It influences the way they feel about their condition and how likely they are to seek medical care.² Instead of the terms that would be used, we would encourage the authors to reword their language so that they state “pregnant women with overweight and obesity,” which acknowledges that these women have these clinical entities but are not defined by them.

We encourage *Clinical Nurse Specialist* to begin using obesity-specific people-first language in all articles and publications. Societal assumptions such as the notion that individuals with obesity are to blame for their weight impact their emotional and physical health. It has been agreed that stigma undermines public health; however, this principle is rarely applied to the obesity epidemic.³ Making an effort to use people-first language will continue to help remove bias and stigmatization of people with obesity.

References

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