January 15, 2025 – ST. PAUL, Minn.

Fellow healthcare providers,

Millions of Americans each day walk into appointments with physicians with common colds, sore joints, mental health concerns, or a multitude of other conditions. Many of these patients will also experience a redirection to an unrelated conversation about weight and BMI, especially those in larger bodies.

Nationally, 30 million people will suffer from an eating disorder at some point in their lifetime. Beyond them, there are millions more with disordered eating habits and unhealthy relationships with food that go untreated.

For any patient, an unexpected turn in a conversation towards weight, or worse, BMI, can be triggering, anxiety-inducing, and distressing. These conversations happen often but are not commonplace everywhere. Thanks to dialogues about this experience, many physicians are becoming increasingly aware and conscious of potential triggers.

Despite this knowing, weight and/or BMI are still treated as standard data to be included on patient-facing charts, after-visit summaries, and more.

Until now.

One organization, M Health Fairview, a Minneapolis-based care provider, did something admirable. After receiving a patient request about removing weight and BMI from after-visit summaries, they listened and did just that.

Since then, the response has been palpable. Dozens of Fairview patients have noticed the system update and reached out to express their surprise and appreciation for such a simple but impactful change, including some of The Emily Program's own patients who also receive care at Fairview.

At The Emily Program, we understand better than most the hundreds of day-to-day experiences that can be triggering for people with difficult relationships with food. This change is a direct, actionable step forward that providers can take to eliminate unnecessary triggers and improve overall patient experience and comfort with their healthcare providers.

Some patients may not notice the change, but it will cause deep relief for many.

Healthcare providers are always seeking ways to better support their patients, and we encourage all providers to implement this change within their own organizations. This is our call to action.

A small change can go a long way for many, and we urge more healthcare organizations to make this change.

Sincerely,
Your Friends at The Emily Program