

March 2024

## The Celebrity Effect: How Social Media Changed Ozempic Utilization by Medicaid Patients

Sara L. Ma MS

Wayne State University School of Medicine, gx6717@wayne.edu

Mihaela-Elena Rapolti MD

Detroit Medical Center, mrapolti@yahoo.com

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/som\\_srs](https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/som_srs)

 Part of the [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Ma, Sara L. MS and Rapolti, Mihaela-Elena MD, "The Celebrity Effect: How Social Media Changed Ozempic Utilization by Medicaid Patients" (2024). *Medical Student Research Symposium*. 298.  
[https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/som\\_srs/298](https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/som_srs/298)

This Research Abstract is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Medicine at DigitalCommons@WayneState. It has been accepted for inclusion in Medical Student Research Symposium by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@WayneState.

## **“The Celebrity Effect: How Social Media Changed Ozempic Utilization by Medicaid Patients”**

### **Abstract:**

**Background:** Recently, glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 agonists), a drug class used to treat Type 2 Diabetes, has gained popularity on social media for cosmetic weight loss. Celebrity endorsement of Ozempic, brand name of GLP-1 agonist semaglutide, has increased public demand and caused supply shortages. However, effects on Medicaid patients, who use Ozempic for diabetes, have yet to be investigated.

**Methods:** We sourced publicly available drug utilization datasets from Medicaid.gov. Nationwide Medicaid reimbursement data for Ozempic, Wegovy (another brand name of semaglutide), and Jardiance (different diabetes medication drug class) were extracted for 2021, 2022, and 2023. Rates of change per quarter per calendar year were calculated, and two-tailed student’s paired T-tests were conducted.

**Results:** Social media promotions for Ozempic largely began 2022Q4 (Oct 1-Dec 31). Medicaid Ozempic utilization prior to 2022Q4 were significantly different from Jardiance regarding reimbursed units, number of prescriptions, total amount, and Medicaid amount ( $p < 0.05$ ), but data after 2022Q4 did not sustain this trend. Further analysis showed decreased Ozempic usage after 2022Q4, implying that concomitant social media endorsements may have limited supply to diabetic Medicaid patients. Interestingly, these trends were not substantiated with Wegovy ( $p > 0.05$ ), potentially correlating with a difference in publicity for weight loss use compared to Ozempic.

**Conclusion:** This study strongly suggests that social media has impacted Ozempic usage spanning different socioeconomic classes nationwide. Plastic surgeons with aesthetic services should be conscientious of the downstream effects of prescribing cosmetic weight loss drugs and manage patient expectations accordingly as social media continues to drive public demand.

**Keywords:** Semaglutide, GLP-1 agonist, Ozempic, Wegovy, Social Media, Medicaid