

## Exploring New Evidence on Weight Gain During Pregnancy and Perinatal Outcomes

### Planning Committee Member Bios

**Kathleen M. Rasmussen, Sc.D.**, (chair) is the Nancy Schlegel Meinig Professor of Maternal and Child Nutrition (emeritus) at Cornell University, where she spent her academic career. She received her advanced degrees in nutrition from the Harvard School of Public Health. Her research focuses on the nutritional needs of pregnant and lactating women. It has been recognized by awards from the American Public Health Association as well as the International Society for Research on Human Milk and Lactation. Dr. Rasmussen worked on NIH's Pregnancy Technical Expert Collaborative for the Pregnancy and Birth to 24 Months (P/B-24) Project and the BEGIN Project on breastfeeding and breast milk. She has served on numerous committees at the National Academies, and as the chair of five of them. These included the committee that revised the guidelines for weight gain during pregnancy (2009) and the WIC food packages (2017). Most recently, she was a member of the committee that investigated the supply, market competition, and regulation of infant formula in the United States (2024). Dr. Rasmussen is a senior consultant on the Steering Committee providing technical support to WHO to develop optimal weight gain ranges and global standards for gestational weight gain. Dr. Rasmussen has served as the elected president of the International Society for Research on Human Milk and Lactation and the American Society for Nutritional Sciences. In addition, she has received career-achievement awards for her contributions in education, mentoring, and public service in nutrition. She is currently the chair of the board of directors at the Food Bank of the Southern Tier (N.Y.) and is a member of the Food and Nutrition Board at National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

**Aline Andres, Ph.D., R.D.**, is Professor of Pediatrics at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and Associate Director of the Arkansas Children's Nutrition Center. Her research focuses on the impact of maternal and children nutrition and metabolism on cardiometabolic health. Dr. Andres has a M.S. (2001) degree and Ph.D. (2007) degree in nutrition and is a registered dietitian and certified lactation counselor. Relative to the proposed activity, Dr. Andres was a member of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Advisory Committee, with specific subcommittees assignments related to prenatal and postnatal nutrition and health. She has been a member and chair of the Obesity Society membership committee. Dr. Andres has received the American Society for Nutrition Nutritional Sciences Award in 2022.

**Esa M. Davis, M.D., M.P.H.**, is a Professor of Family & Community Medicine, Senior Associate Dean of Population Health and Community Medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and Associate Vice President for Community Health at the University of Maryland Baltimore. Dr. Davis's research examines perinatal determinants of adverse maternal cardiovascular health outcomes. Her research has contributed new knowledge on the relationship of perinatal risk factors for maternal obesity and adverse health outcomes, such as gestational diabetes, hypertension disorders pregnancy and peripartum cardiomyopathy. She contributed key epidemiologic studies that delineated the relationship of parity, pregnancy weight gain and intervals in the development of maternal obesity, as well as showed the disproportionate parity-related incidence of obesity by race. She conducted comparative effectiveness trials on screening strategies for gestational diabetes, and strategies to improve blood pressure in women with hypertensive disorder of pregnancy. She served on prior NAM committees focused on pregnancy weight gain, childhood obesity, nutrition in pregnancy/children. She is Vice Chair US Preventive Services Task Force. She earned an M.D. from the UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical school, completed Family Medicine residency at Overlook Hospital, earned an MPH and

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completed postdoctoral research fellowship at Johns Hopkins University Schools of Public Health and Medicine.

**Emma M. Eggleston, M.D., M.P.H.**, is the Associate Vice President of Community Health Innovation and Chief of Diabetes and Obesity Prevention at the West Virginia University School of Medicine, where she also directs the WVU Medicine East Center for Diabetes and Metabolic Health. Dr. Eggleston received her master's in public health and her medical degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She completed residency in Medicine at Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston, MA and fellowship in Endocrinology at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA. Prior to coming to WVU, Dr. Eggleston held faculty positions at the Harvard Medical School Department of Population Medicine, and Brigham and Women's Hospital where she was a member of the Obesity Prevention program and Co-Director of the BWH Diabetes in Pregnancy Program, respectively. She has conducted health services research in diabetes and obesity in pregnancy, public health surveillance of diabetes, and the impact of health insurance design on diabetes disparities and outcomes.

**Richard S. Legro, M.D.**, is University Professor and Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Penn State University College of Medicine in Hershey, PA. His research and clinical practice are primarily focused on polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) as well as on improving infertility diagnosis and treatment. More recently his research has focused on obesity and maternal health. He has published over 300 peer-reviewed articles. He has been continuously funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health for over 25 years as a Principal Investigator. He has received many awards including election as a member of the National Academy of Medicine in the U.S. and as Ad Eundem member of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in the U.K.

**Emily Oken, M.D., M.P.H.**, is Professor and Chair in the Department of Population Medicine at Harvard Medical School (HMS) and the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Institute. She is also Professor in the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health. Her research focuses on the influences of nutrition and other modifiable factors during pregnancy and early childhood on long-term maternal and child health, especially cardiometabolic health, cognitive development, asthma, and atopy. She has also led a number of studies examining predictors and sequelae of maternal overweight, weight gain, and related conditions such as gestational diabetes mellitus in the peripartum period. Her work on the toxicant risks and nutrient benefits of prenatal fish consumption has influenced national and international guidelines for fish consumption during pregnancy, helping to shift the previous focus of risk-only or benefit-only studies to a broader emphasis on the overall health effects of fish consumption for mother and baby. In support of this work, she has led longitudinal studies commencing in the peripartum period and following mothers and children throughout childhood. She is Principal Investigator of Project Viva, a groundbreaking US pre-birth cohort study that has followed pregnant women and their children since 1999. She leads and collaborates on many other studies, including ECHO Boston, a cohort in the Environmental influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) consortium; Programming Research in Obesity, Growth, Environment and Social Stressors (PROGRESS) in Mexico, and the Promotion of Breastfeeding Intervention Trial (PROBIT), a cluster-randomized trial of breastfeeding promotion in the Republic of Belarus.

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**Leanne Redman, Ph.D.**, is a Professor at Pennington Biomedical Research Center and Associate Executive Director of Scientific Education. Dr. Redman's primary research expertise lies in the intersection of obesity, metabolic disorders, and women's health. Her laboratory — the Reproductive Endocrinology and Women's Health Laboratory — conducts research in pregnant individuals (and their infants) with the goal to understand and lessen the impact of maternal obesity and metabolic disease on mothers and babies. She has made key contributions to understanding the physiological and behavioral drivers of gestational weight gain, designing and testing novel in-person and telehealth interventions to improve maternal outcomes and translating this knowledge from the research setting to public health programs. Dr. Redman has over 250 publications and she has received several prestigious honors, including awards for recognitions of her contributions to maternal obesity by The Obesity Society and the American Society of Nutrition and the National Postdoctoral Association for mentoring.

### *Committee Consultant*

**Lisa Bodnar, PhD, MPH, RD**, is Professor of Epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health. Her research interests include maternal nutritional status and birth outcomes, nutritional epidemiology, and perinatal epidemiology. Her research goal is to discover the healthiest dietary patterns and weight to promote the health of pregnant women and their children. Dr. Bodnar has contributed to scientifically advancing our understanding of optimal weight gain recommendations during pregnancy, the reproductive consequences of maternal obesity, and the association between dietary patterns and adverse pregnancy and birth outcomes. She has contributed her experience to several national panels that set guidelines for nutrition during pregnancy, including the 2009 Institute of Medicine Committee to Reevaluate Pregnancy Weight Gain Guidelines. Dr. Bodnar serves as a member of the Technical Advisory Group on Gestational Weight Gain that advises the WHO on the development of global gestational weight gain standards and optimal ranges. She received her PhD in Nutrition with an Epidemiology minor from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and shortly thereafter completed her postdoctoral fellowship in reproductive biology with Magee-Women's Research Institute and University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.