

Marek BioSketch

I am ecstatic to be a nominee and candidate for the Integrated Health Executive Council (IHEC) for the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS). I have an extensive background and training in metabolic and bariatric surgery since 2010. I have trained in Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (MBS) with some of the leading experts in the field at Cleveland Clinic and the Medical University of South Carolina. I am now academic faculty at Sam Houston State University and have developed an extensive program of research in MBS that has led to collaborations across the United States. I have over 60 peer-reviewed publications, most of which are focused on advancing pre-surgical psychological evaluations and how they predict various outcomes beyond weight loss. I also have my own private practice and conduct pre-surgical MBS evaluations and help more rural clinics coordinate psychological care.

I strongly believe behavioral health plays a crucial role in the success of our patients. My mission is to ensure that behavioral health specialists continue to play an integral role in MBS and at ASMBS. As part of the IHEC, I would like to advocate for a better understanding of post-operative functioning beyond physical health markers. Although MBS leads to sustained weight loss for many and pre-surgical psychosocial factors are equivocal as to whether they predict weight loss outcomes based on extant literature, we need to better establish what our role is for our patients. At ASMBS, our role as behavioral health professionals is to help the field understand how best to optimize patient outcomes beyond just total weight loss. Indeed, our field needs to instead better understand the mechanisms that psychosocial functioning plays in those who do not sustain a good outcome. Multidisciplinary collaborations are the sure path forward and promoting these kinds of conversations, talks, and ideas will continue to optimize our MBS field. It would be an honor to join this council, give back to ASMBS for all the professional development and collaboration it has given me, and help to continue to grow integrated health at ASMBS by being a member of the IHEC.