

Hilton-Rowe Brief Profile/Biography and Goals for the ASMBS:

Dr. L. Renee Hilton-Rowe is an Associate Professor at the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University. She is the Division Chief of Minimally Invasive Surgery and the Director of the Center of Obesity and Metabolism. She is the past State Access to Care Representative for the state of Georgia and is currently serving as the immediate past president of the ASMBS Georgia state chapter. She is the Access to Care Committee Chair for ASMBS. She serves as a board member for the ASMBS PAC Board of Directors. She is on the board of the Georgia Chapter American College of Surgeons. At Wellstar MCG she maintains an active clinical practice and serves in major quality roles as Surgical Quality Officer for the health system and the Director of Quality for the Department of Surgery.

I have been a proud member of the ASMBS since fellowship and have served in many roles on different committees over the past decade. I have dedicated a significant amount of time and effort to advocacy and access to care. This will continue to be a major focus of mine if elected to the board. I have made multiple trips to Washington D.C on behalf of our society as well as countless local advocacy trips to advocate for policy change to make obesity access equitable for all patients. I was successful in leading a large national response to CMS when metabolic procedures were threatened to be taken off the inpatient only list. We have made adoption of the new ASMBS guidelines a priority for the Access to Care Committee and now have more than 135,875,200 lives covered under the 2022 guidelines as well as over 48,000,000 lives covered for SADI. We are currently addressing restrictive policies such as those which only cover one procedure per lifetime and those which require prolonged medication or preoperative diet and exercise before surgery. Access to care is always changing with new challenges; the work of an advocate is never done. If I were selected to serve on the board of directors, I would continue fighting for our patients and surgeons until we see equity in obesity care, but I would not stop there since I believe improving utilization is as important to our mission as improving access. Improving utilization and the way we approach comprehensive obesity care needs to change dramatically. We cannot continue to practice in silos as medicine or surgery. Establishing clear guidelines for comprehensive treatment including medication, behavioral health, and surgical options is a top priority of mine. We have more tools than ever before to treat the disease of obesity, and if we use them responsibly and in an evidence-based manner then we will be able to offer treatment to more patients than ever before.

Dr. Hilton-Rowe currently resides and practices in Augusta, Georgia. She enjoys spending time with her family, hiking, skiing, boating, traveling and pretty much any activity that involves the outdoors and her children. You can find her on X @reneehilton30 and Instagram @reneehiltonrowe.md