

Caring for Evidence. Research and Care in Bariatric Surgery

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The recent years have witnessed an impressive increase in bariatric surgery rates and gastric banding and bypasses have become prevalent methods in treating morbid obesity. Despite being the only treatments with measurable long-term weight-loss rates, surgical interventions are often faced with scepticism from within and outside medicine. This scepticism towards what is often conceived as an objectifying 'technical fix' is part of larger debates in biomedicine. As a technological intervention, these procedures build on highly standardized practices that are in tension with an increasing demand for patient-centred and diversity-sensitive care. Drawing on an ethnographic study of a clinical research project for the pre- and after-care of bariatric patients, we investigate how these tensions are addressed within clinical work and evidentiary research practices. In doing so, we relate to on-going discussions within STS in regard to questions of evidence-based medicine, standardization and objectification.