



Turning the Tide on Mental Health Trends

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

(In order of appearance on the program)

KATHRYN SANTORO, MA is Director of Programming at the National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM), Foundation, a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization dedicated to transforming health care through evidence and collaboration. Ms. Santoro currently leads NIHCM's programs to highlight market and policy innovations, including webinars and Capitol Hill briefings, and directs the organization's journalism and population health programs.

Ms. Santoro joined NIHCM Foundation in September 2004 after receiving her Master's degree in Public Policy from the George Washington University with a focus on women's health policy. Ms. Santoro previously served as a Project Consultant for Women in Government where she was responsible for compiling a state-by-state report card on access to cervical cancer screening. While pursuing her Master's degree, Ms. Santoro was a Communications Assistant for a health policy consulting firm and a Graduate Intern for a Washington, D.C. based women's and children's policy research organization. Ms. Santoro attended Villanova University in Villanova, PA and graduated with a BA cum laude in Political Science.

PAUL GIONFRIDDO was named President and CEO of Mental Health America on May 1, 2014. He has worked in a variety of health and mental-health related positions during a career spanning over thirty years. In 2013, he was appointed by HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to a four-year term on the 12-member National Advisory Council to the SAMHSA Center for Mental Health Services.

Prior to joining MHA, he was a consultant, speaker, and writer, and author of a popular weekly health policy blog entitled Our Health Policy Matters. His essay entitled How I Helped Create a Flawed Mental Health System That's Failed Millions – And My Son, was published as the Narrative Matters essay (and was the most-read article) in the September 2012 issue of Health Affairs and was also published in the Washington Post in October 2012. The full-length version of the story was published as a book, entitled Losing Tim: How Our Health and Education Systems Failed My Son with Schizophrenia, and was released by Columbia University Press in the fall of 2014.

Mr. Gionfriddo has also led nonprofit organizations in three states. He served as President of the Quantum Foundation, a private health foundation in Palm Beach County FL from 2007 to 2010 and as Executive Director of the Palm Beach County Community Health Alliance from 2005 to 2007. He was Executive Director of the Indigent Care Collaboration in Austin TX from 2001 to 2005, and Executive Director of the Connecticut Association for Human Services in Hartford CT from 1995 to 2001.

From 1991 to 1995, he ran his own consulting business, specializing in public health, children's health, primary care, mental health, and long term care policy and practice. He consulted for a number of Federal, State, and local agencies, private foundations, and nonprofits, including the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, the National Center for Health Statistics, the National Governors Association, and the National Conference of State Legislatures.

From 1978 through 1991, he served as a full-time elected official, the first eleven of those years in the Connecticut State Legislature, where he held several leadership positions, including Deputy Majority Leader and chair of the Public Health Committee and Health and Human Services Subcommittees of the Appropriations Committee. For the final two years, he served as Mayor of Middletown, Connecticut.

In addition to his governmental, private, and nonprofit work, Mr. Gionfriddo has been a member of the Adjunct Faculty of both Wesleyan University and Trinity College, where he developed and taught graduate-level courses in public policy. He was also a member of the faculty of the Applied Statistics Training Institute of the National Center for Health Statistics.

Mr. Gionfriddo has served on many local, state, and national nonprofit Boards, for organizations serving people with mental illness, substance use disorders, and/or developmental disabilities, and for others engaged in child advocacy and clean energy advocacy. He is currently a member of the Board of the Jerome Golden Center for Behavioral Health in West Palm Beach, Florida and the Golden Center Foundation.

He is a graduate of Wesleyan University. He lives with his wife, Pam, who is CEO of the Mental Health Association of Palm Beach County, in Lake Worth, Florida. They have five adult children and two grandchildren.

SUZANNE KUNIS is the Director of Behavioral Health Solutions for Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey. She brings over 30 years of experience in the health care industry with a significant focus on behavioral health. Ms. Kunis is a registered nurse and moved from care delivery to health care management early in her career.

In March 2017, Ms. Kunis joined Horizon BCBSNJ to lead the development of the long-term strategy for integrating medical and behavioral health services. She is responsible for the development of new behavioral health capabilities, programs and services. She also oversees the implementation of behavioral health value-based arrangements in the provider community. The opioid crisis in New Jersey and the continued battle to eliminate mental health stigma are priority items on her agenda.

Prior to joining Horizon BCBSNJ, Ms. Kunis served for 22 years as Senior Vice President of Behavioral Health Services for Magellan Health Services. She was the business owner for Magellan's health plan (Commercial, Medicare and Medicaid) and employer client relationships. She was responsible for oversight and management of nationwide service delivery including member services, clinical operations, network development and management, quality, sales, EAP and finance. During her tenure with Magellan, Ms. Kunis developed a deep understanding of the behavioral health care issues facing our country and the long overdue recognition of the impact of behavioral health issues on comorbid medical conditions.

Ms. Kunis also served as Senior Vice President of Account Management and Implementations for ComplexCare Solutions (CCS). CCS provided in-home risk adjustment assessments and care management services for its health plan clients.

After graduating from Thomas Jefferson University, College of Allied Health Sciences in Philadelphia, Ms. Kunis began her nursing career at the East Orange Veterans Administration Hospital. She then began a 12-year career journey with which was then Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey where she served many roles including Vice President of the Individual Market segment.

After 26-years, Ms. Kunis has rejoined Horizon BCBSNJ to support the behavioral health integration.

KITTY PURINGTON, JD is a senior program director at NASHP, where she leads the organization's work on chronic care and vulnerable populations. This work includes state policy issues such as delivery system and payment reform, integrated care, behavioral health, HIV/AIDS, and the intersection of housing and health. Prior to joining NASHP, Ms. Purington served as the Program and Policy Manager for Maine's Value-Based Purchasing Initiative, overseeing the development of that state's Medicaid behavioral health home model for adults with serious mental illness and children with serious emotional disturbance, as well as the implementation and expansion of its existing health home initiative for Medicaid enrollees with chronic physical health conditions. She has close to 20 years experience in state Medicaid policies that support individuals with behavioral health and other chronic care needs, and has also worked as an attorney focusing on elder law, disability, and health-related issues. Ms. Purington has a J.D. from the University of Maine School of Law and a B.A from the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

JOHN AUERBACH is the President and CEO of the Trust for America's Health (TFAH), a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to saving lives by protecting the health of every community and working to make disease prevention a national priority. TFAH conducts science-based research, issues policy-oriented reports addressing key health issues, shares best practices from communities large and small across the nation, and brings diverse groups together to effectively respond to current and emerging health threats of all kinds.

He was formerly the Associate Director for Policy and the Acting Director of the Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support (OSTLTS) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). As such he managed the CDC's Policy Office, which focused on strengthening the collaboration between the public health and health care sectors, and he oversaw key activities and technical assistance that supported the nation's health departments and the public health system.

Prior to his appointment at CDC, he was a Distinguished Professor of Practice in Health Sciences and the Director of the Institute on Urban Health Research and Practice at Northeastern University from 2012 to 2014.

He was the Commissioner of Public Health for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from 2007 to 2012. He participated in the implementation of the state's innovative health care reform law and developed public health programs that promoted health equity, emergency preparedness and chronic and infectious disease prevention. Prior to his

appointment as Commissioner, Auerbach had been the Executive Director of the Boston Public Health Commission for 9 years. In this position he oversaw a wide range of city services including those addressing substance abuse, homelessness and emergency medical services.

He had previously worked at the State Health Department for a decade, first as the Chief of Staff and later as an Assistant Commissioner overseeing the HIV/AIDS Bureau during the early years of the epidemic.