



**NIHCM**  
FOUNDATION

## **Telehealth: A Vital Piece of the Care Access Puzzle**

May 1, 2024

### SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

(In order of appearance on the program)

**Kathryn Santoro, MA**, is the Senior Director of Programming at NIHCM Foundation. Ms. Santoro joined NIHCM in 2004 and currently leads the Foundation's Journalism programs, co-leads Policy and Education programs, and oversees Communications. Ms. Santoro leads the Foundation's webinar program, which facilitates dialogue among experts on health care and public health topics to inform and educate health care leaders, the media, policymakers, and other key stakeholders.

Previously, Ms. Santoro was a Communications Assistant with Robert Betz Associates, a health policy consulting firm, and a Project Consultant for Women in Government/Digene Corporation, where she led the development of a state-by-state report card on cervical cancer screening.

In 2019, Ms. Santoro completed the Emerging Women Executives in Healthcare Leadership program at the T.H. Chan School of Public Health at Harvard University. She received her master's degree in public policy and women's studies from The George Washington University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science and women's studies from Villanova University.

**Mei Wa Kwong, JD** is the Executive Director at the Center for Connected Health Policy. Mei Wa Kwong joined CCHP in March 2010 as a Policy Associate and was named Executive Director in January 2018. Ms. Kwong leads the organization's work on public policy issues as they impact telehealth on the state and federal level. She is also the project director for the National Telehealth Policy Resource Center.

Ms. Kwong is a nationally recognized expert on telehealth policy. In her current role at CCHP she works with the organization's multitude of national and regional partners on telehealth issues and oversees CCHP's projects, provides policy technical assistance to state and federal lawmakers, industry members, providers, consumers and others. She manages CCHP's staff and works closely with CCHP's consultants. She has been published in peer review journals and is a sought after speaker at national conferences.

Prior to joining CCHP, Ms. Kwong was a public policy analyst for Children's Home Society of California, working on child care and early education issues on the state and federal levels. She also worked extensively with the Child Development Policy Institute, a statewide public policy organization, and was recognized by them in 2004 for her work in the early care and education field. She was at the National Association of Real Estate Investment Trusts in Washington, DC working on federal tax issues, and administered the association's political action committee. Ms. Kwong holds a BA in International Affairs from George Washington University, and a JD from George Washington University Law School.

**Saif Khairat, PhD, MPH, FAMIA** is the Beerstecher-Blackwell Distinguished Term Scholar and associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Khairat holds joint appointments at the Carolina Health Informatics Program, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, and the School of Nursing. He is also the Associate Director of the Carolina Health Informatics Program (CHIP) and Director of the Carolina Applied Informatics Research (CAIR) group.

Dr. Khairat is the Principal Investigator of the new NIH/NCATS-funded Center for Virtual Care Value and Equity (ViVE), a Center dedicated to advancing translational research in virtual care by building knowledge and tools to accelerate virtual care equity and sustainability.

As a health informatics expert, Dr. Khairat investigates developing, implementing, and evaluating Health IT solutions to improve health equity and access, particularly in virtual care. He has authored over 90 influential scientific articles in more than 35 peer-reviewed high-impact journals and conferences. Over the past five years, he has been an investigator for more than \$7.5 million in research grants.

Dr. Khairat is a leader within the American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) and the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS). He was inducted among the inaugural class of Fellows of AMIA in 2019. Dr. Khairat earned his Ph.D. in

Health Informatics and MPH in Health Policy and Management from Gilling's School of Global Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Manuel (Manny) Arisso** is a leader in healthcare, specializing in innovation, public health, health strategy, behavioral health, and health care integration. Manny has a proven record in business management across various sectors from startup, implementation, and ongoing operations realizing significant growth to sustainability and continued profitable execution.

Manny has been with Carelon Behavioral Health for eight years, overseeing innovation across the business life cycle for specialty behavioral health, foster care and children with special healthcare needs within Elevance Health's current and future Medicaid markets. In his former role, he served as the President of our provider owned business, Carelon Behavioral Care, in addition to oversight of Elevance Health's behavioral health offering across Commercial, Medicaid, and Medicare books of business serving over 40 million members.

In his current role as Chief Network Officer and President of the Employer Division, Manny is responsible for continuing the development and execution of a robust network access strategy to drive improved network performance and access to high-quality, integrated care.

Prior to joining Elevance Health, he held key roles within Magellan Health Services government affairs, business strategy and health plan operations.

Manny graduated with a Juris Doctorate from Florida State University College of Law and is a licensed health risk manager along with certifications in rate setting process for regulated industries from Michigan State University.