



**NIHCM**  
FOUNDATION

## **The Health Impact of Loneliness: Emerging Evidence and Interventions**

### **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 whose mission is to promote improvements in health care access, management and quality. Ms. Santoro currently leads NIHCM's *Driving Value* webinar series and directs the organization's maternal and child health programs. Under these projects, she conducts research and analysis on health policy issues in support of improving practices used by health care decision makers and industry leaders.

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.

**DONALD M. BERWICK, MD, MPP, FRCP** is President Emeritus and Senior Fellow of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and also a former Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. A pediatrician by background, Dr. Berwick has served on the faculty of the Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health, and on the staffs of Boston's Children's Hospital Medical Center, Massachusetts General Hospital, and the Brigham and Women's Hospital. He has also served as Vice Chair of the US Preventive Services Task Force, the first "Independent Member" of the American Hospital Association Board of Trustees, and Chair of the National Advisory Council of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. He served two terms on the Institute of Medicine's (IOM's) Governing Council, was a member of the IOM's Global Health Board, and served on President Clinton's Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Healthcare Industry. Recognized as a leading authority on health care quality and improvement, Dr. Berwick has received numerous awards for his contributions. In 2005, he was appointed "Honorary Knight Commander of the British Empire" by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II in recognition of his work with the British National Health

Service. Dr. Berwick is the author or co-author of over 160 scientific articles and six books. He currently serves as Lecturer in the Department of Health Care Policy at Harvard Medical School.

**Robin Caruso, MSW, LCSW** is the Chief Togetherness Officer at CareMore. Ms. Caruso has been a social worker for over 29 years. She has a BA in Sociology and received her Master's in Social Work from the University of Southern California.

Ms. Caruso specializes in the field of behavioral health and medical social work for seniors, and end of life issues. She started the Social Work program at CareMore Health 11 years ago, where she began addressing the social determinants of healthcare.

Ms. Caruso is currently serving as CareMore Health's first Chief Togetherness Officer to combat loneliness in the senior population. As the Chief Togetherness Officer, Ms. Caruso leads the program to ensure that loneliness is addressed as a treatable condition. As a result of Ms. Caruso's work to integrate the Togetherness program into CareMore's clinical model, the program is now being launched to Anthem Medicare members.

Since the inception of the Togetherness program in 2017, Robin has spoken at the national HIMSS conference, Health 2.0, and Stanford Medicine X on addressing loneliness and social isolation in the healthcare setting. She is a member of the Los Angeles Social Isolation and Loneliness Coalition and is published in the AJMC. In 2018 Ms. Caruso received the Athena Healthcare Innovation Award for her work through the Togetherness program to address senior loneliness.

**Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Ph.D.** is a professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Brigham Young University. Dr. Holt-Lunstad's research is focused on the long-term health effects of social connection. Her work has been seminal in the recognition of social isolation and loneliness as risk factors for early mortality. Professor Holt-Lunstad runs the Social Connections and Health Research Laboratory at BYU. Dr. Holt-Lunstad has worked with government organizations aimed at addressing this issue. She has provided expert testimony in a US Congressional Hearing, provided expert recommendations for the US Surgeon General Emotional Well-Being in America Initiative, and is currently a member of the technical working group for the UK Cross Departmental Loneliness Team. She also serves as a scientific advisor for the Australian Coalition to End Loneliness, the Foundation for Art & Healing, and research advisory panel for AARP Services, Inc., United Healthcare, and Rural Aging. She has been awarded the Citation Award for Excellence in Research by the Society of Behavioral Medicine, the George A. Miller Award from the American Psychological Association, the Mary Lou Fulton Young Scholar Award, the Marjorie Pay Hinkley Endowed Chair Research Award, and is a Fellow for the Association of Psychological Science. Her work has been highlighted in the BBC 100 Breakthrough Health Discoveries in 2015, and has been covered in the New York Times, The Washington Post, Time Magazine, Scientific American, This American Life, The Today Show, and other major media outlets.