



Hospital Consolidation: Mergers, Antitrust, and Health Equity

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 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.

Zack Cooper is an Associate Professor of Public Health and Associate Professor of Economics at Yale University. He also serves as Director of Health Policy at Yale's Institution for Social and Policy Studies. Professor Cooper is a health economist whose work is focused on producing data-driven scholarship that can inform public policy. In his academic work, he has analyzed the impact of competition in hospital and insurance markets, studied the influence of price transparency on consumer behavior, investigated the causes of surprise out-of-network bills, and examined the influence of electoral politics on health care spending growth. Cooper has published his research in leading economics and medical journals including the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* and the *New England Journal of Medicine*. He has also presented his research at the White House, the Department of Justice, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

In January 2021, Zack Cooper and Fiona Scott Morton launched the 1% Steps for Health Care Reform project. The aim of the project is to harness the power of rigorous economic scholarship to identify tangible steps that can be taken to reduce health care spending in the US without harming quality. The project includes 16 briefs written by leading economists that describe 16 specific interventions, which would collectively lower health care costs in the US by approximately \$400 billion annually. You can hear a description of the project on the Freakonomics Podcast (Part 1 and Part 2).

Cooper received his undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago and his PhD from the London School of Economics, where he received the Richard Titmuss prize for Best PhD thesis. He was an Economic and Social Science Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow in economics at the LSE's Centre for Economic Performance where he remains a Faculty Associate. Cooper is a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research and a 2019 winner of an Andrew Carnegie Fellowship from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

His research on health care spending on the privately insured can be found at: healthcarepricingproject.org.

Rahul Rao is the Deputy Director of the Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Competition, where he is part of the leadership team supervising over 300 attorneys and support staff in enforcing U.S. antitrust laws. Rahul oversees teams conducting merger reviews, anticompetitive conduct investigations, and antitrust litigation. Before joining the FTC front office, Rahul was a Managing Assistant Attorney General and Antitrust Team Leader at the Washington State Attorney General's Office.

Rahul speaks frequently on antitrust, labor competition, and related litigation. He has testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Antitrust. Rahul has also spoken on antitrust and litigation issues at panels and workshops hosted by the U.S. Department of Justice, the National Association of Attorneys General, and the American Bar Association, including several times at the ABA's annual Antitrust Spring Meeting.

Rahul moved into public service after two years as a stay-at-home parent to his then newborn son. Before that, he spent time in the private sector, including at two international law firms.

Lois Uttley, MPP, has worked with communities across the United States for more than 25 years to protect patients' rights and access to care when health systems are consolidating. She conducts research, policy analysis, advocacy, public education, community organizing and regulatory intervention at the state and federal levels. She teaches in the Master's in Health Advocacy Program at Sarah Lawrence College. Based in Manhattan, she co-founded Community Voices for Health System Accountability (CVHSA), a statewide alliance that is raising consumer voices as health systems propose

mergers, acquisitions, new construction, downsizing and closings of hospitals. CVHSA successfully advocated for a new state law that requires independent health equity assessments of the likely impact on medically-underserved people when health facilities propose changes that would cause the elimination, reduction or relocation of services. The assessments must include meaningful engagement of affected community residents.

Ms. Uttley led the MergerWatch Project for 20 years before joining Community Catalyst, where she created the Hospital Equity and Accountability Project. In 2023, she launched an independent health policy and advocacy consulting practice. Earlier in her career, she was Director of Public Affairs for the NYS Department of Health and a journalist covering New York State government for the Albany Times Union. She has served as President of the Public Health Association of NYC and Chair of the national Action Board and Joint Policy Committee of the American Public Health Association (APHA). She earned a Master's in Public Affairs and Policy from the Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at the University at Albany.

Ms. Uttley has deep knowledge of health systems transformation and the ways in which consumers can be affected. She was lead author of "Empowering New York Consumers in an Era of Hospital Consolidation" (May 2018), which recommended that state oversight of hospital consolidation be more transparent and engaging of affected consumers and require hospitals to predict the impact of proposed mergers on the price of health care. That study was the basis of her article, "Giving New Yorkers a Voice in Oversight of Hospital Consolidation," published in the Spring 2019 issue of the New York State Bar Association's Health Law Journal. She also has led teams of researchers and analysts in publishing studies of the growth of large Catholic health systems (2020) and the impact of their restrictions on provision of reproductive services, pregnancy emergency care and gender-affirming care; and a 2021 study of the lack of state regulation of urgent care centers and retail health clinics.