



## **Addressing Rural Health Needs: COVID-19, Equity and Access to Care**

### **SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES**

(In order of appearance on the program)

**Caitlin Ellis, MPA** is the Director of Research Programs for the National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM) Foundation in Washington, D.C. In this role, Ms. Ellis conducts research and analysis to inform and improve management strategies for health care leaders in the public and private sector. She also provides support for NIHCM's broad programming portfolio, including webinars, events, grants and awards. Ms. Ellis works across a wide range of topics, including the opioid crisis and mental health, rural health, and maternal and child health. Prior to joining NIHCM, Ms. Ellis held several political and nonprofit internships and fellowships. Originally from California, Ms. Ellis received her Master's in Public Affairs with a concentration in Policy Analysis from the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University, Bloomington, and she holds a BA in Politics from Willamette University.

**Tom Morris** serves as the Associate Administrator for Rural Health Policy in the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). In that role, Tom oversees the work of the Office of Rural Health Policy, which is charged with advising the Secretary on rural health issues. The Office, which has an annual budget of \$317 million, administers a range of research and capacity building grant programs that serve rural communities. In 2015, Tom received the Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Service. A North Carolina native, Tom came into government as a Presidential Management Intern and has work experience in the U.S. Senate as well as various policy and program positions within HRSA and HHS.

**Josh Jorgensen** serves as the Government Affairs and Policy Director at the National Rural Health Association (NRHA). Josh joined the NRHA staff in 2020.

Josh previously served as legislative aide for U.S. Senator Mike Rounds. In this role, he worked extensively on rural health care policy. This work included Indian Health Service

reform, telehealth advancement and the creation of a ready reserve within the United State Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. Previously, Josh worked at the American Enterprise Institute assisting the external affairs department.

Josh earned a bachelor's degree in both journalism and political science from the University of South Dakota.

**Dr. Creshelle R. Nash, MD, MPH**, is the medical director for Health Equity and Public Programs at Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield. In this role, Dr. Nash provides leadership for developing, implementing, and evaluating health equity initiatives to help create a more inclusive and non-discriminatory healthcare system throughout Arkansas.

Dr. Nash provides oversight and guidance on public programs and products to improve health equity for all Arkansans. This role includes a position on the leadership committee for the Vaccinate the Natural State initiative, a combined effort from a diverse set of organizations working to increase the adoption of COVID-19 vaccines across Arkansas and ensure equitable access and distribution. Dr. Nash is passionate about addressing health disparities in Arkansas' most vulnerable communities and takes action as a leader throughout the state.

In addition to her role at Arkansas Blue Cross, Dr. Nash serves as a consultant for Community Engagement and Social Determinants of Health and Equity at the University of Arkansas College of Public Health, where she is also the co-director of the Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Service Learning Course.

Prior to her work with Arkansas Blue Cross, Dr. Nash served as the medical director for the Arkansas Minority Health Commission, where she developed and implemented community outreach programs and partnerships.

Dr. Nash completed medical school at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD, and served her residency in the Primary Care Internal Medicine Residency Training Program at George Washington University Hospital in Washington, DC. She received a Master of Public Health degree from Harvard University School of Public Health and completed a fellowship in Minority Health Policy from Harvard University School of Public Health, also in Washington, D.C.