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Achieving Health Equity for People with Disabilities During the Pandemic and Beyond

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

(In order of appearance on the program)

Caitlin Ellis, MPA is a Program Manager 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.

Bonnielin K. Swenor, PhD, MPH is an epidemiologist and associate professor at The Johns Hopkins Wilmer Eye Institute and the Epidemiology Department at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She is the founder and director of the Johns Hopkins Disability Health Research Center, which addresses health inequities for people with disabilities and aims to shift the paradigm from 'living with a disability' to 'thriving with a disability'. The Center focuses on establishing evidence, developing strategies, and shaping policy to maximize health, inclusion, and equity for people with all types of disabilities. Dr. Swenor's career is motivated by her personal experience with visual impairment, and she uses a multidisciplinary approach to conduct research to identify and address barriers to health equity and societal inclusion for people with disabilities.

Dr. Swenor received a master of public health and doctorate degrees in epidemiology from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and completed a postdoctoral research fellowship at the National Institute on Aging.

Merrill Friedman leads the advocacy strategy and Disability Policy Engagement team for Anthem. She works collaboratively with consumers, advocates and stakeholders to

ensure diverse interests and preferences of older adults and individuals with disabilities inform Anthem's health benefits approaches and healthcare programs. Ms. Friedman advances the integration of the independent living philosophy and the National Advisory Board (NAB) on Improving Healthcare Services for Older Adults and People with Disabilities six foundational principles throughout programs, individual interactions, and business practices. In addition, she leads strategic partnerships with national and local organizations to advance the development of inclusive public policy relating to healthcare equity and access.

Previously, Ms. Friedman was interim director at a nonprofit foster care agency serving children and adolescents who experienced severe neglect and abuse. She also served as president and chief executive officer of a private organization that owned and operated residential treatment facilities, group homes and home and community-based services in several states for adolescents with mental health conditions, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Ms. Friedman has served on numerous national boards and commissions. She was appointed by President Barack Obama to the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities and by Governor Jennifer Granholm to the MI Statewide Independent Living Council where she served as Board Chair. Currently, Ms. Friedman serves on the board of directors for Rebuilding Together, the National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI), and the Institute for Exceptional Care (IEC), and is a member of ADvancing States MLTSS Institute Advisory Board.

Tawara D. Goode, MA is an assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics, Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, D.C. She has been on the faculty of the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development (GUCCHD), for over 30 years and has served in many capacities. She has degrees in early childhood education and education and human development.

Professor Goode has extensive experience as a principal investigator for federal and private sector grants and contracts. A primary area of focus for Professor Goode is national level efforts to advance and sustain cultural and linguistic competence within an array of settings including but not limited to institutions of higher education, health, mental health, and other human service systems. Professor Goode is the director of the National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) at GUCCHD. The NCCC has been in existence since 1995 during which Professor Goode was the director for 25 years. *The mission of the NCCC is to increase the capacity of health care and mental health care programs to design, implement, and evaluate culturally and linguistically competent service delivery systems to address growing diversity, persistent disparities, and to promote health and mental health equity.* Professor Goode is acknowledged as a thought leader in the area of cultural and linguistic competence and for building the NCCC into a nationally and internationally recognized and award winning program. She

had a primary role in developing curricula, assessment instruments, professional development series, and other resources that support cultural and linguistic competence. Professor Good has been an invited scholar, lecturer, and visiting faculty: a) nationally to schools of medicine, public health, education, research institutes, professional associations, and state and national government; and b) internationally in Australia, South America, and the United Kingdom.

Professor Goode is also the director of the Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (GUCEDD) and is responsible for short-term and ongoing programs for individuals at-risk for and with developmental and other disabilities and their families. Her duties include program development, administration, and teaching within the University and community settings. She served as the principal investigator for three grants of national significance from the Office on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Administration for Community Living at HHS. They include: 1) the Leadership Institute for Cultural Diversity and Cultural and Linguistic Competence (completed 2/20); Community of Practice on Cultural and Linguistic Competence in Developmental Disabilities (ongoing); and Embedding Cultural and Linguistic Competence in UCEDD Curricula and Training Activities (completed 2/19). Each of these grants were designed to: 1) increase the number and capacity of leaders to advance and sustain cultural and linguistic competence to respond to the growing cultural diversity among people with developmental disabilities; and 2) develop curricula and professional development for current and future professionals that will teach, provide services and supports, and conduct research with and about people with developmental disabilities, their families, and the communities in which they live.