



National Institute for Health Care Management
(NIHCM) Foundation Webinar

**Opioid Abuse in the U.S.:
An Urgent Public Health Crisis**

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES
(In order of appearance on the program)

KATHRYN SANTORO, MA is Director of Policy and Development 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.

DR. CECE SPITZNAS, PhD is Senior Science Policy Advisor in the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), a component of the Executive Office of the President. She provides policy analysis and scientific advice to the ONDCP Director and Chief of Staff on special matters of concern to ONDCP, such as emerging drug trends and demand reduction, and helps to develop legislative responses to problems of national scope, particularly on opioids and Rx drugs. In 2012, she organized a National Leadership Meeting for ONDCP on Maternal Substance Use and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome. From 2000-12 Dr. Spitznas was a program official at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) where her research portfolio concerned developing and testing new screening, brief interventions and treatments for people with substance use disorders, including pregnant women, and developing provider training. She received her clinical and research training in psychology at the University of New Mexico and the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) School of Medicine. She worked as a research professor at UAB conducting research on relapse and treatment for crack cocaine use in homeless cocaine users prior to joining the NIH.

GRANT T. BALDWIN, PhD, MPH is the Director of the Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He has served in this capacity since September 2008. He started his career at CDC almost 20 years ago.

Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for persons 1 to 44 years of age. DUIP is dedicated to reducing the number and severity of unintentional injuries through science-based programs and applied research. CDC is focused on preventing injuries and fatalities from motor vehicle-related crashes, older adult falls, prescription drug overdoses, and traumatic brain injuries – especially those caused in youth sports and recreation.

Dr. Baldwin received his PhD in Health Behavior and Health Education at the University of Michigan School of Public Health in 2003. He also received a MPH in Behavioral Sciences and Health Education from the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in 1996. Currently, he is also an adjunct Associate Professor at Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health

THOMAS KOWALSKI, RPh Tom graduated Albany College of Pharmacy, Albany NY in 1985 with a BS in Pharmacy. Since then, he has worked as a pharmacist in a variety of community settings, in New York and Massachusetts before joining Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts in 1997. Currently, Tom is the Director of Clinical Pharmacy responsible for development, implementation and management of clinical and safety programs for drugs in both the pharmacy and medical benefits. He is actively involved in several Blue Cross Blue Shield Association initiatives is currently a National Council of Physician and Pharmacists Committee member and a member of the Association's Technology Evaluation Center Specialty Pharmacy Steering Committee.

DAWN ABEL is director of community relations and foundations for BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee, which has more than 5,000 employees and serves 3.3 million members in the state and across the country. She directs the development and implementation of the company's proactive community relations strategy.

In this role, Abel leads the corporate outreach and foundation management. She leads the research for grants and community investment opportunities and manages special initiatives serving Tennessee communities. She works closely with all internal areas of the company as well as with external partners.

Prior to joining BlueCross, Abel worked in a variety of leadership and community outreach roles in Chattanooga with Alexian Brothers Health System, the Adventure Guild and the Computer Horizon Corporation.

She is a board member of the American Red Cross of Southeast Tennessee, the Chattanooga Women's Leadership Institute, the Estate Planning Council of Greater Chattanooga, and the Tennessee Charitable Care Network.

Abel earned a master's degree in management of aging services from the University of Maryland and a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She also earned a professional development certificate in gerontology from Kennesaw State University.

GEOGY THOMAS MD, FAAFP (pronounced "Joe G") is a Family Physician and the Medical Director for Dayspring Family Health Center, a community health center located in the Appalachian Mountains. He loves practicing the full spectrum of family medicine including surgical obstetrics. He and his wife, Jessie, just celebrated 20 years of marriage and have 3 beautiful children.

Geogy was born in India and raised in the suburbs of Chicago. He received his Medical Degree from the University of Illinois and then completed his residency at Ventura County Medical Center in Ventura, California.

It would take the NHSC Scholar Program to move the Thomas's from the beautiful California coast to the majestic Appalachian Mountains. It was in the small town of Jellico, Tennessee that Geogy started to see the plight of the rural poor and the disparities of healthcare system in America. In particular, Geogy was compelled by TN's staggering addiction to prescription drugs and the devastating effects on its most vulnerable patients, pregnant women and their babies. Dr. Thomas and his team are committed to providing compassionate care, helping women overcome their addictions and reclaim their lives, their families, and their futures.

JULIE SNYDER joined BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York in 2011 and is the company's Vice President, Corporate Relations.

Snyder provides strategic leadership for corporate communications, internal communications, media relations, and key corporate initiatives. She focuses on enhancing the organization's reputation through transparent and effective internal and external messaging strategies.

Prior to joining BlueCross BlueShield, Snyder served as executive director of Sisters Hospital Foundation where she was responsible for the hospital's fund development and disbursement of grants. She also served as a member of Sisters Hospital's senior leadership team and active liaison with Catholic Health leadership regarding philanthropy and community relations. Additionally, Snyder functioned as director of communications for the Buffalo Niagara Partnership from 1994 to 2000.

Snyder earned a bachelor's degree in public communication from American University. She serves on the Board of Trustees for the Catholic Charities of Buffalo, Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, and the Board of Directors for the Buffalo Therapeutic Riding Center. Additionally Snyder serves on a number of marketing committees for various non-profits including Buffalo Center for Arts and Technology, HEALTHeLINK, and 43North.