

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Nathan T. Chomilo, MD, FAAP

Dr. Nathan T. Chomilo is Medical Director for the State of Minnesota's Medicaid & MinnesotaCare programs and practices as a General Pediatrician with Park Nicollet Health Services/HealthPartners. He also served as the State of Minnesota's COVID-19 vaccine equity director and is currently a Senior Advisor on Equity to the Minnesota Commissioner of Health. He received a Zoology degree from Miami University (Oxford, OH) and graduated from the University of Minnesota Medical School. He completed his combined residency in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota and was the Pediatric Chief Resident at the University of Minnesota Children's Hospital. His advocacy work has included the impact early childhood intervention and healthcare access have on the long-term prospects of our children and how physicians and health systems can address racial & health equity. He is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Early Childhood and the Section on Minority Health, Equity & Inclusion (MHEI), serving on MHEI's Executive Committee and is one of the Early Childhood Champions for the MN chapter of the AAP where he also serves on the board of directors. He is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota Medical School, cofounded the organization Minnesota Doctors for Health Equity, serves on the board of directors of Reach Out and Read, was formerly appointed to the Minnesota Governor's Early Learning Council and serves on the steering committee of the Minnesota Perinatal Quality Collaborative. His work has been recognized by Reach Out and Read National which awarded him the 2018 Medical Champion Achievement Award, the City of Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights which recognized him as a 2019 History Maker at Home recipient, Minnesota Physician which named him a one of the 100 most influential health care leaders in 2020 and the Minnesota Medical Association which awarded him the President's Award in 2021.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Karen M. Dale, RN, MSN

Karen M. Dale, R.N., MSN, Stakeholder Engagement Core member, is Market President for AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia, a mission-based Medicaid Managed Care Organization in Washington, D.C. Dale is also the Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer for the AmeriHealth Caritas Family of Companies. Her focus includes applying a health equity lens to impact all levels of policies, processes, decisions, laws and outcomes for the communities AmeriHealth Caritas serves. She also leads a decidedly metric-driven business approach to mobilize leaders and accelerate strategies to advance diversity, equity and inclusion inside and outside the walls of AmeriHealth Caritas. As a result, opportunities for people to experience health, wholeness and belonging are enhanced by addressing the social, economic and environmental conditions that are drivers of poor health. Dale's vision is notably reflected in key programs addressing Black maternal health, racism, housing, transportation, violence interruption and food insecurity. In addition, her philosophy that health care must evolve into a health ecosystem that promotes wellness without barriers, starting where people are, has led to several collaborative relationships with providers, community partners, philanthropists and businesses to implement sustainable, scalable solutions with high impact.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



LaKeesha Dumas

LaKeesha Dumas was born and raised in Portland, OR where she has seen first-hand the gentrification, gang violence, drug epidemic, and trauma faced by her community. She currently works as the Office of Consumer Engagement Coordinator for Multnomah County, Oregon and has a wealth of knowledge through her work as well as her own lived experience in recovery from a substance abuse disorder and mental health challenges. Since being in recovery, she has worked tirelessly to help her community foster hope and connect with the appropriate resources to become healthier and overcome barriers to recovery. LaKeesha is certified by the State of Oregon as a Community Health Worker, Peer Wellness Specialist, Adult Addictions Peer Support Specialist, Adult Mental Health Peer Support Specialist, and Youth and Young Adult Peer Support Specialist. In her work, she helps to pave the way for more peers and people with lived experience to be at the tables where decisions are being made about consumers' health and needs.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Dennis Heaphy

Dennis is a Health Justice Advocate at the Disability Policy Consortium (DPC), a cross-disability civil rights organization in Massachusetts. His activities include: co-chair to Disability Advocates Advancing Our Healthcare Rights (DAAHR), a statewide grassroots disability coalition; chair to Massachusetts dual eligible demonstration “One Care Implementation Council”; vice-chair of MA Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Program advisory committee; and several national committees. He also heads DPC’s YesHealth Participatory Action Research team. One project being undertaken is research on the experiences of people with disabilities and a co-occurring opioid substance use disorder. Dennis is committed to advancing equity at the intersectional level to address intentional discrimination and/or de facto biases towards persons with disabilities who are members of racial and minority populations. This requires tackling disparities in health access and outcomes for persons with disabilities due to racism and other SDOH.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Sinsi Hernández-Cancio, JD

Sinsi Hernández-Cancio is the Vice President for Health Justice at the National Partnership for Women & Families. Sinsi is a national health and health care equity policy and advocacy thought leader with extensive experience spanning the government, labor, and non-profit arenas, dedicated to advancing equal opportunity for women and families of color and advocating for better health care access and quality for all. Sinsi believes our shared prosperity depends on transforming our health care system to meet the needs of our rapidly evolving nation so that it provides excellent, comprehensive, culturally centered and affordable care for every single person, family and community, which requires dismantling structural racism and other systemic inequities. Born in Puerto Rico, she holds a JD from NYU Law and an AB from Princeton University.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Jay Ludlam, JD

Jay Ludlam joined the NC Department of Health and Human Services' Medicaid program in August 2017. Mr. Ludlam led the statewide NC DHHS Medicaid Transformation project and launched the biggest change in NC Medicaid's history. North Carolina's Transformation project is recognized for its innovation and commitment to whole-person care, including addressing unmet resource needs. He is an attorney and executive with extensive experience in Medicaid, managed care, health care delivery reform, and quality and care management innovations. Before joining the Department, he served as an Assistant Attorney General for Missouri in its Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and as Missouri's acting state Medicaid Director.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Srinivas Merugu, MD

Dr. Srinivas Merugu is an Internist with over 10 years of clinical practice and 15 years of hospital administration and health plan experience. He obtained his medical degree from Osmania Medical College in Hyderabad, India, and completed his Internal Medicine residency at St. Vincent Charity Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio. He was part of a multispecialty group practice in Cleveland until 2014. At St. Vincent Charity Medical Center, he served in several leadership positions including Associate Residency Program Director, Chair of Hospital Performance Improvement and Patient Safety and as the hospital's first Chief Medical Informatics Officer. His passion for innovation, management of complex populations and health policy leadership drew him to the role with United Healthcare Community Plan of Ohio. As Chief Medical Officer and Vice President of Population Health, he leads the population health management team in setting and delivering on strategic clinical, quality, health equity, financial and performance improvement goals. He led the health plan in attaining the NCQA Multicultural Health Care distinction and strives to bring equity to the population his plan serves through leadership of strategy development, program implementation, building stakeholder collaboration and advocacy within and outside the organization. He is currently serving as a Regional Chief Medical Officer for United Healthcare's Community and State plans where he will continue to lead efforts geared towards achieving the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Quintuple Aim.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Pooja Mittal, DO

Dr. Mittal is Medical Director of Health Equity at HealthNet, a Medicaid managed care organization. She is a family physician and uses this lens to design strategic initiatives to improve care for the most vulnerable. She is a member of the leadership team that works to further equitable care through a population health model for all HealthNet members. She has an expertise in digital health through her work in the HealthNet Digital Platforms Workgroup devising a defined digital strategy to support quality and member engagement.

Dr. Mittal also works at the National Clinicians Consultation Center at UCSF, a national HIV/AIDS warmline, where she is recognized as a national expert on Perinatal HIV care. She is an Adjunct Associate Professor at University of California, San Francisco and Stanford University School of Medicine. In addition to her clinical work, she has published in the areas of well-child care, group visits, preconception care, health equity and perinatal HIV.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Denise Octavia Smith, CHW, PN, MBA

Denise Octavia Smith, CHW, PN, MBA is the founding Executive Director of the National Association of Community Health Workers, Visiting Scholar at the Harvard Medical School Center for Primary Care Program in Global Primary Care and Social Change, Aspen Institute Healthy Communities Fellow, and a Robert Wood Johnson Culture of Health Leader. As a woman of African descent, a Community Health Worker, certified patient navigator and survivor of a rare chronic disease, Denise envisions a culture of health where individuals have self-determination and dignity, where communities meaningfully contribute to system design and governance and where societies eliminate structural barriers to well-being. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Denise co-founded the Community Based Workforce Alliance and the Vaccine Equity Cooperative to advocate for national racial equity principles and policies that affirm and sustain community expertise and capacity in COVID-19 response and community recovery and developed the first National CHW Policy Platform with recommendations for public and private institutions to respect, protect and authentically partner with CHWs and their Networks. Denise advises the Rockefeller Foundation, ASTHO, CDC 2109/2110 grantees, the Morehouse School of Medicine, United Health Care and the Harvard Medical School Center for Primary Care S.A.V.E. In Community and Rural Health Program among others on COVID response, CHW integration, legislation and workforce sustainability. Denise is currently funded by the Johnson and Johnson Foundation to develop a national CHW leadership team and develop a data-driven campaign to advance CHW professional identity, policy leadership and organizational capacity. She has also assembled global and U.S. federal, state and community subject matter experts to design a National CHW Registry.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Jamil Rivers

The Chrysalis Initiative was born from Jamil's experiences offering guidance to women on how to thrive with breast cancer, even as she was actively receiving chemo herself. At only 39 years old, Jamil was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer de novo. The determination to fight and survive for her family launched her into vigorous research to understand and contend with breast cancer. The extensive research Jamil undertook along her own journey became the foundation of a lifelong commitment to exploring and enacting optimal and comprehensive breast cancer care.

Jamil went on to participate in numerous community health events which facilitated the design and funding of two metastatic clinical trials. This afforded her the opportunity to meet with leadership within the PA governor's office and congressional leaders in D.C. She became an advocate, using her knowledge base and experiences to help advance legislative policy, medical research, and customize support to better meet the needs of individuals who have breast cancer (particularly metastatic), Black patients and other disparate groups.

Jamil is Board President of METAvivor Research and Support, Inc. She is a Young Advocate Alum, Board Member of Living Beyond Breast Cancer and Advisory Chair of the *Knowledge is Power: Understanding Black Breast Cancer* series. She is a policy science and health equity advocate and metastatic advisory committee member with Susan G. Komen. In addition, she is a member and patient advisor of the Metastatic Breast Cancer Alliance. Jamil is also a Project LEAD graduate and proposal reviewer for the Breast Cancer Research program with the Department of Defense.

Jamil also testified to the FDA in order to connect many women with resources for screenings, treatment, and support. She has been featured in People Magazine, the Philadelphia Inquirer, the Philadelphia Tribune, national campaigns for Anthropologie, Novartis, Pfizer and Cancer and Careers, as well as on CBS News and Good Morning America.

Jamil also incorporates integrative therapies and is doing well thanks to chemotherapy coupled with improving her nutrition. She and her husband have three children and reside in Drexel Hill, PA.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Jelena Todić, MSW, PhD

Jelena Todić, MSW, PhD is a researcher, health equity strategist, and award-winning educator passionate about just places good for our health. Dr. Todić is also an assistant professor of social work at the University of Texas at San Antonio College for Health, Community, and Policy and a fellow at the Social Work Health Futures Lab, a National Program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Her research focuses on cultures, infrastructures, and praxis that grow health-affirming places.

Dr. Todić's research and praxis draw from 20 years of experience enabling equity-focused organizational and community change, designing social justice education, and practicing social work in healthcare settings. She has collaborated with numerous academic institutions, healthcare systems, and community organizations to advance equity in their work. Some of the past collaborators include UChicago Medicine, Illinois Health and Hospital Association, Dell Medical School, Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, St. Louis Integrated Health Network, University of Kansas School of Medicine, National Conference for Community and Justice St. Louis Region, YWCA Metro St. Louis, and Wesleyan University. As a social justice educator and facilitator, Dr. Todić focuses on fostering critical consciousness, strengthening growth-fostering relationships, and supporting change agents who will take bold actions to create health-affirming places. Critical consciousness includes the ability to notice contradictions within unjust social structures, uncover the root causes of these contradictions, reflect on the role individuals and organizations play in upholding the unjust structures, and take action to transform them.

Dr. Todić received her M.S.W. from Washington University in St. Louis and her Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Texas at Austin.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Roberta Waite, EdD, PMHCNS, ANEF, FAAN

Dr. Roberta Waite has had a long professional career as a nurse working in trauma I level academic health systems as a clinician and administrator and in higher education working at Drexel University for the past 19 years. Waite was a tenured professor in Doctoral nursing and Associate Dean of Community-Centered Health & Wellness and Academic Integration at Drexel. She also served as the Executive Director of the Stephen and Sandra Sheller 11th Street Family Health Services of Drexel University, operated in partnership with Family Practice and Counseling Network. She created the Macy Undergraduate Leadership Fellows Program, an interdisciplinary program for students in the College of Nursing and Health Professions and the School of Public Health, focusing on leadership development while concurrently fostering critical consciousness using a social justice lens. Waite's scholarship and research centers on behavioral health, structural influencers of health and racial justice. In July 2022, Waite became Dean of Georgetown University School of Nursing and tenured professor. Waite also serves as a board director for corporate Trinity Health (a leading, national, multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery system operating 92 hospitals in 22 states, including 120 continuing care locations encompassing home care, hospice, PACE and senior living facilities), the Family Process Institute, and Independence Blue Cross Foundation. She recently served as an expert for Governor Wolf's Think Tank to develop guidelines and benchmarks for a Trauma Informed Commonwealth of PA and served as co-chair of the Racial and Communal Trauma Prevention Action Team for HEAL PAs' Trauma-Informed Pennsylvania leadership team. Waite also serves on the Advisory Group for COACH (Collaborative Opportunities to Advance Community Health), a cross-sector collaborative that brings together health systems and community-based organizations to address community health needs in Greater Philadelphia.

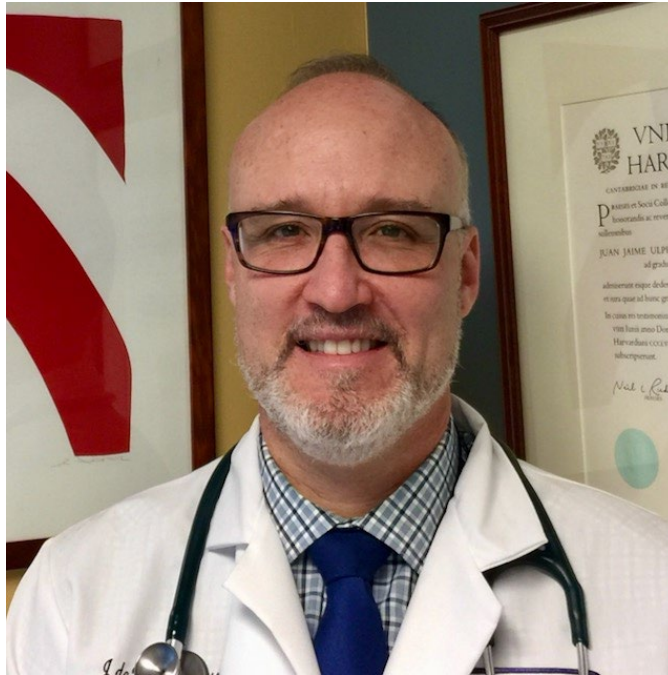
National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Naomi D. Williams

Naomi D. Williams is a mother on a mission to help families and caregivers navigate life with differently-abled kids. She believes individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities can and should lead an exceptional life. Naomi has added author, grief coach and yoga instructor to her toolbox, all tools that have served her well as an advocate and navigator. Naomi was the 2020-21 Public Policy Fellow with the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, a principal in the 6,000 waiting documentary (2019), and a current 2021-22 National Consumer Scholar. Naomi has spoken on local, regional and national platforms making the connection and showing the interdependence necessary of raising a differently-abled child as a productive member of society. Areas of interest and expertise: maternal and infant mortality; mental health; disabilities; patient and provider communication and education; health literacy.

National Advisory Committee Members 2023



Juan Jaime de Zengotita, MD

Juan Jaime de Zengotita is a primary care doctor and the Director of Medical Services at Fenway Health. Fenway Health advocates for and delivers innovative, equitable, accessible health care, supportive services, and transformative research and education. We center LGBTQIA+ people, BIPOC individuals, and other underserved communities to enable our local, national, and global neighbors to flourish. He formerly was the medical director of the Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center, and a Regional Medical Director at the BWH Primary Care Center of Excellence. He has clinical interests in community health, racial justice and equity work, LGBTQ+ health and QI. He did his internal medicine training at the US Naval Medical Center at Portsmouth, Virginia. He identifies as Puerto Rican and Spanish ethnicity, Queer, multiracial, and male, using the he series pronouns.