



NASMHPD Annual 2026 Meeting

Presenter Biographies

Thank you to all the presenters for their valuable contributions to this conference.

Session 1: Sunday, July 26, 2026, from 9:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Eastern Commissioner Panel: Navigating Changing Times and Keeping the Vision

Ann Marie Sullivan, M.D. (ann.sullivan@omh.ny.gov)

Ann Sullivan has served as NYS Mental Health Commissioner since 2014, making her currently the longest tenured State Commissioner. She is responsible for ensuring the viability and effectiveness of the public mental health system that serves over 800,000 individuals including 23 State-operated psychiatric centers providing inpatient and community-based services. Under her leadership, OMH is implementing Governor Kathy Hochul's landmark plan to transform the state's mental health system and expand access to care for all New Yorkers. To date, this initiative has invested more than \$2 billion into dramatically expanding services, supports, and capacity across the state.

During her tenure, Dr. Sullivan has worked tirelessly to build a robust continuum of mental health services across the lifespan from prevention to intensive treatment for complex needs. Expanding access to care has involved the implementation and expansion of programs such as the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, addressing reimbursement barriers and expanding network adequacy, to the continuous development of residential units – now totaling over 51,000. Advancing efforts to provide integrated care has been a priority for Dr. Sullivan throughout her career.

Previously, Dr. Sullivan served as senior vice president for the Queens Health Network of NYC Health + Hospitals, and director of psychiatry at Elmhurst and Queens Hospitals. She has taught, lectured, and published on best practices in community care and is an active mental health advocate.

Nora Bock, M.S., L.P.C. (nora.bock@dmh.gov)

Nora Bock is the Director of the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) within the Missouri Department of Mental Health (DMH). Nora joined DMH in 2001. She served in a variety of positions through the years, playing key roles in the joining of two divisions to become DBH; making medications for opioid and alcohol use disorders a standard of care; pushing for language change in addiction; supporting and overseeing the change in the substance use disorder clinical treatment model and payment methodology; and the creation of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics in Missouri. In Nora's current role, she oversees both community-based prevention, treatment, and recovery services, as well as community-based psychiatric programs. In addition, she is responsible for the state's five inpatient forensic hospitals, as well as the single state-operated psychiatric children's hospital. She has been active in NASADAD since 2009, serving as the NTN/NTC. She was designated as the SSA for Missouri in 2021.

Kimberly Boswell, M.S.W. (kimberly.boswell@mh.alabama.gov)

Kimberly G. Boswell was sworn in as Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) on December 16, 2020. Governor Kay Ivey said of Commissioner Boswell, "She has spent the

entirety of her professional career devoted to helping struggling individuals and I appreciate her willingness to serve in this new capacity. Her background as a mental health provider as well as administrator makes her uniquely qualified.” Since 2021, Boswell has created and expanded the Alabama Crisis System of Care, which is comprised of Crisis Centers, Mobile Crisis Teams, and the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. The Alabama Crisis System of Care offers individuals experiencing a mental health, substance use and/or suicidal crisis access to vital services, not previously available in the state.

Boswell has more than 36 years of experience working with individuals with mental illness, substance use disorders, and developmental disabilities. Boswell previously served as Chief of Staff, Associate Commissioner for Administration, and Director of Human Resources for ADMH. Over the course of her career, she worked as a planner to improve human service delivery systems, a program evaluator, a School to Work transition coordinator, and also served as the state office administrator for the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. Boswell is a board member of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), the National Academy for State Health Policy, and the Long Term and Chronic Care Committee. She is also a member of the Mescal’s Children Center for Hope Board, a Christian ministry serving children in Kenya.

She earned her Master of Social Work from the Florida State University College of Social Work in 1984, with a specialization in planning and program evaluation. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work degree from The University of Alabama at Birmingham. Boswell received Florida State University’s Distinguished Alumni in Social Work Policy and Administration Award in 2023. Boswell resides in Montgomery, with her husband Cary.

Nancy Navarretta, M.A., L.P.C., N.C.C. (nancy.navarretta@ct.gov)

Ms. Navarretta has extensive experience in public and private program development, strategic planning, leadership, and process improvement resulting in the delivery of effective, recovery-oriented, and integrated healthcare systems. In June 2021, she was appointed as Acting Commissioner of DMHAS, before being confirmed as Commissioner in 2022 and then being reappointed by Governor Lamont in 2023.

DMHAS is an adult behavioral healthcare and lifespan prevention agency serving approximately 100,000 individuals annually. Ms. Navarretta prioritizes accessible, integrated behavioral health systems of care which are informed by multiple stakeholders including individuals with lived experience. She currently co-chairs Connecticut’s Alcohol and Drug Policy Council, Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee and Fatherhood Initiative and represents Connecticut nationally as the Northeast Region Representative of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) Board as well as serving as a member of the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) Public Policy Committee. Ms. Navarretta previously served as Deputy Commissioner of the department from 2015 – 2021 and was responsible for project management and strategic planning as part of executive leadership while managing several divisions and initiatives including the state’s opioid response efforts. Ms. Navarretta began public service with DMHAS in 2013 as the Department’s Director of Behavioral Health Services.

Ms. Navarretta came to the Department with many years of experience as a direct service mental health and addictions provider and behavioral healthcare administrator. She maintains memberships with American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and the American Counseling Association (ACA). She received her BA in Psychology from Boston College and completed her graduate studies at Fordham University with an MA in Clinical Psychology. Ms. Navarretta is a Licensed Counselor in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Prior to joining the Department, Ms. Navarretta’s senior leadership roles included serving as Chief Operating Officer of Liberation Programs Inc., a private non-profit serving Fairfield County and Chief of Behavioral Health Services for Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center serving Greater New Haven.

Marie Williams, L.C.S.W. (marie.williams@tn.gov)

Marie Williams, LCSW, was reappointed Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) by Governor Bill Lee on January 19, 2019. Ms. Williams was initially appointed to the position by Gov. Bill Haslam, effective October 22, 2016. She is the longest-serving Commissioner in the department's 70+ year history.

As Commissioner, Ms. Williams oversees and leads the department in its role as the state's public mental health and substance abuse authority with an annual budget of about \$680 million. She provides leadership and oversight to more than 1,850 full-time positions that assist individuals to secure treatment and recovery services for serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbances, and substance use disorders. In all, the department serves approximately 750,000 Tennesseans annually. In her time as Commissioner, Ms. Williams has served as a leader in addressing several essential issues facing Tennessee including behavioral health workforce challenges, mental health struggles of youth and young adults, the opioid crisis, criminal justice reform, leveraging the abilities and resources of the faith-based community, and expanding peer-led services, but her career in behavioral health services has been marked by a special passion for housing with a legacy of establishing the Creating Homes Initiative which has leveraged more than \$1.4 billion to create more than 37,000 housing opportunities.

Commissioner Williams is the recipient of numerous professional and community awards from national and state groups including the Excellence in Advocacy Individual Achievement Award from the National Council for Behavioral Health, the George Goodman and Ruth P. Brudney National Social Work Award from Mental Health America, the Alumni Professional Achievement Award from the University of Tennessee Knoxville, and the Senator Douglas Henry Award for Service to Children and Families at Risk from the University of Tennessee College of Social Work. Ms. Williams lives in Nashville, and she is the mother of Nikki Williams.

Session 2: Sunday, July 26, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m. Eastern
The CCBHC Transformation Project in MI, KS, and IL

Jessica Monahan Pollard, Ph.D. (jessica.pollard@nasmhpd.org)

Jessica Monahan Pollard, PhD is a Licensed Psychologist and Senior Behavioral Health Advisor at the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD). At NASMHPD Dr. Pollard provides technical assistance to state leaders and develops resources around early serious mental illness, workforce, digital mental health, Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs), and financing. She earned a doctorate at the University of Connecticut, a fellowship at Yale University School of Medicine in community mental health, and then returned to her home state of Maine, working in integrating primary care and behavioral health and founding early intervention services. Dr. Pollard returned to Yale in 2013 as Assistant Professor in Psychiatry and Clinical Director of Early Psychosis Services, focusing on workforce development, transitions of care, and justice system involvement. Dr. Pollard was appointed by Governor Mills as Director of the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) for Maine's Department of Health and Human Services. There she led implementation of Maine's first crisis receiving center, the Overdose Prevention Through Intensive Outreach, Naloxone and Safety (OPTIONS) program, behavioral health response to the COVID-19 pandemic (StrengthenME), innovative forensic policy, roll-out of 9-8-8, and other successful initiatives. Dr. Pollard is past Chair for Mental Health for the American Public Health Association (APHA) and a recipient of the APHA Mental Health Section Award "For Excellence in the Field of Mental Health." She has authored dozens of peer reviewed publications, book chapters, technical assistance papers, continuing education courses, and has presented around the US and the world.

Andi Smith (andis@ballmergroup.com)

Andi Smith is the Executive Director of National Behavioral Health and Ballmer Group's Washington team, where she sets and leads strategy and investments to improve economic mobility for children and families statewide. Andi holds deep experience in government systems and policy across issues including child welfare, early childhood, homeless youth, and housing. Previously, Andi served as the Executive Director of External Affairs for Washington Governor Jay Inslee, Policy Officer for WA Governor Christine Gregoire, and Lead Policy Analyst for the Washington State House of Representatives.

Leah Pollack (Leah_Pollack@mckinsey.com)

Leah is a leader in our Public & Social Sector Practice where she supports clients in addressing the mental health crisis affecting youth and young adults coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. She has worked with a range of federal agencies, state and local governments, and foundations on post-COVID-19 recovery strategies and transformation efforts. Leah's is leading a behavioral health transformation for a US state improving access to behavioral healthcare for more than eight million citizens; manages a nationwide COVID-19 recovery effort regarding learning recovery and youth mental health in K-12 education that impacted more than 23 million students in over 20 school systems; is developing a coalition strategy for more than 40 not-for-profit organizations and foundations in K-12 education to address COVID-19 learning recovery and mental health; creating a workforce-resilience effort with a federal agency using advanced analytics to identify opportunities to identify and assist at-risk employees; and leads a strategy and transformation engagement with a \$15 billion federal agency impacting over 65,000 employees. Before joining McKinsey, Leah worked in the federal government. She is a "mental health champion," having completed the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health's executive education program on scaling mental healthcare services. Leah serves on the board of directors of Wild Ones, a national not for profit.

Kristen Morningstar (morningstark@michigan.gov)

Kristen Morningstar is the Director of Specialty Behavioral Health Services at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. In this role, she oversees adult community-based system of care for adults with mental illness, substance use disorders and developmental disabilities. Previously, Kristen was Senior Advisor to the MDHHS Chief Deputy Director for Health, where she focused on behavioral health special initiatives including expanding access to and availability of behavioral health services in Michigan. Throughout her tenure with MDHHS, Kristen has also served as the Behavioral Health Budget Manager. In this role, she was responsible for the coordination and oversight of all budget and financing for Michigan's behavioral health programs. Kristen holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and was a 2018 policy fellow at the Center for Healthcare Research and Transformation at the University of Michigan.

Drew Adkins, M.B.A. (drew.adkins@ks.gov)

Drew Adkins is the Commissioner for Behavioral Health at the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services. In that role, he serves as the state's mental health Authority and the single state authority for substance abuse. Commissioner Adkins oversees six separate divisions in the Behavioral Health Commission and roughly a \$350 million budget. The BHS commission is responsible for programs such as oversight of certified community behavioral health clinics, problem gambling, crisis intervention and stabilization centers, SAMHSA's Mental Health and Substance Use block grants, housing, and employment programming for individuals with serious mental illness, suicide prevention and primary prevention efforts, Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility oversight, and tasked with constructing and creating the states first state run kids Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility.

Drew has a background in Missouri state government, working most recently in the Missouri Department of Mental Health as the Communications Specialist for the Office of Disaster Services and serving a stint with the Missouri Department of Economic Development. He also served several years as legislative staff

in the Missouri House of Representatives, most recently working for the Missouri House Budget Chairman in fiscal policy.

Drew has a Master of Business Administration, a Graduate Certificate in Business Analytics from the Bloch School at UMKC, and a Master of Science and Bachelor of Science from Missouri State University. Drew was recently appointed to the Board of the National Research Institute, which is part of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, and appointed to the board of the National Association for State Drug Agency and Alcohol Directors. Drew has been happily married to his wife, Slone, for 4 years, and they live in Platte City, Missouri. Drew was appointed interim Commissioner of Behavioral Health Services effective November 27, 2023, and permanently appointed Commissioner on February 5, 2024. He began his tenure with KDADS as Assistant Commissioner of Behavioral Health in October 2021.

David Albert, Ph.D. (david.albert@illinois.gov)

David Albert, Ph.D. is the inaugural Director of the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, Illinois Department of Human Services (DBHR). The Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery was established on 7/1/2025. Prior to his current role, Dr. Albert served as Director of the IDHS Division of Mental Health (DMH), a role he assumed in January, 2020, and as DMH's Deputy Director for Clinical Operations before that. Dr. Albert is currently Vice President of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Mental Health Program Directors. Dr. Albert has previously served as Director of the Student Counseling Service at the University of Chicago, and Director of Counseling and Psychological Services at the University of Hartford. Dr. Albert founded the Child and Adolescent Ambulatory Psychiatry Clinic at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine, where he was a full-time faculty member. He has served as a Consulting Psychologist with the Connecticut Department of Children and Families, where he led a statewide trauma-informed care initiative across the Connecticut's child and adolescent mental health system. Dr. Albert earned a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Northwestern University Medical School and a B.A. in Russian Studies from Amherst College. He is a licensed clinical psychologist with extensive teaching, research, training and publication credits to his name.

Chuck Ingoglia, M.S.W. (chucki@thenationalcouncil.org)

Chuck Ingoglia is the president and CEO of the National Council for Mental Wellbeing where he leads the national charge to ensure people have access to quality, affordable mental health and addiction services. To accomplish this, he harnesses the voices and support of the more than 3,000 National Council members who serve over 10 million individuals nationwide.

Chuck previously led the organization's policy and practice improvement work, directing the organization's federal and state policy efforts and overseeing trainings and programs offered to more than 500,000 behavioral health professionals across the U.S. He has effected change at both the national and state level by playing a major role in policy advocacy and analyses issues relevant to behavioral health. Chuck holds a Master of Social Work and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work, both from The Catholic University of America.

Session 3: Sunday, July 26, 2026, from 11:35 a.m. – 12:05 a.m. Eastern
NRI State Hospitals and Crisis Services Profiles Reports

Carrie Slatton-Hodges, L.P.C. (Carrie.Slatton-Hodges@nri-inc.org)

Carrie Slatton-Hodges, L.P.C. serves as the Executive Director of the NASMHPD Research Institute. Prior to this role, Carrie served as the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substances Abuse Services for 15 years where she ensured that addressing mental health and substance use issues remained a top priority for all Oklahomans. In addition, she has served as a Senior Behavioral Health Program Director for the National Association of Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) and has served on the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) Board of Directors and was named NASADAD's recipient of State Service Award. As a Licensed Professional Counselor for over 35 years, Carrie has hands-on experience and an administrative track record to support that states can deliver transformative treatment and support services through strategic public/private partnerships and has a lifelong commitment to developing and overseeing programs that provide opportunities for those with mental health and addiction needs to live a full life in the community of their choice.

Barbara J. Bazron, Ph.D. (barbara.bazron@dc.gov)

Barbara J. Bazron, Ph.D. is the Director of the DC Department of Behavioral Health, appointed by Mayor Muriel Bowser. In this role, she manages the District's recovery oriented, integrated behavioral health system. Throughout her career, Dr. Bazron has used her expertise in strategic planning and organizational development to build systems of care that promote the integration of mental health and addictions services, foster equity with physical health care and address disparities in health care. Prior to her appointment, Dr. Bazron served as the Deputy Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration which is responsible for the state's services and supports for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders, including five psychiatric hospitals. During her tenure, she led improvements in the forensic services system.

Dr. Bazron previously served as Interim Director and Senior Deputy Director of the District's Department of Behavioral Health where she led initiatives to expand evidence-based practices for children and youth, integrate peer leadership in treatment models and increase access to care in non-traditional settings, including an urgent care clinic located at the US Superior Court for immediate service for court-ordered referrals. She also established a research and evaluation division to collect accurate, reliable data to drive sound decision making. Dr. Bazron is an early innovator and a published author on cultural competency in behavioral health. She also has clinical experience as a family therapist and as an educational diagnostician. Dr. Bazron received a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Pittsburgh, a Master of Education from the University of Cincinnati and a Bachelor of Arts from Oberlin College.

Session 4: Sunday, July 26, 2026, from 12:05 p.m. – 12:50 p.m. Eastern
Workforce: System Considerations from State Hospitals to the Community

Wendy Morris, R.N., M.S.N., C.S. (wendy.morris@nasmhpd.org)

Wendy Morris, RN, MSN, CS is a Senior Behavioral Health Advisor for the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD). She previously served as commissioner for Kentucky's Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, and has enjoyed various roles in direct patient care and leadership across the behavioral health continuum throughout her career. Ms. Morris holds a Master of Science in Community Health Nursing from the University of Kentucky and is credentialed by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) as a Public Health Clinical Nurse Specialist.

Keris Jän Myrick, M.S., M.B.A (keris@inseparable.us)

Keris Jän Myrick, M.S., M.B.A., is Senior Vice President of Partnerships and Innovation at Inseparable and a nationally recognized mental health advocate and executive. She brings over 20 years of experience in peer-led services, equity-focused systems transformation, and mental health policy. Ms. Myrick co-

edits *Psychiatric Services' Lived Experience Inclusion and Leadership* column, is on the editorial board of JMIR Mental Health and serves on the boards of Disability Rights California, and the Center for Health Care Strategies. She also advises Harvard's Digital Psychiatry Program and is a Certified Personal Medicine Coach.

Dennis Mohatt (dmohatt@wiche.edu)

Dennis Mohatt is vice president for behavioral health at WICHE, leading since 2001 its behavioral health program and its Center for Rural Mental Health Research. He has over 30 years of public mental health service. His work has included direct clinical care, clinical supervision, and CEO tenure in a rural CMHC serving Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Additionally, he led a HRSA-funded effort in the early 1990s to successfully integrate mental health and primary care in multiple rural family practice settings. During the late 1990s, he was deputy director for the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, also serving as the state's commissioner of mental health. He has served as a member of the National Rural Health Advisory Committee and led national efforts relating to rural mental health including a role as chief consultant to the president's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health. He is actively engaged in efforts focused on improving services to Veterans, Guard, and Reserve and their families; rural mental health policy; workforce development and increasing adoption of integrated approaches to behavioral and primary care practice. His graduate training, supported by a NIMH Fellowship, focused on rural community-clinical psychology. In 2026, he accepted an appointment to the Suicide Prevention Resource Center's Technical Expert Panel (SPRC). Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the panel will serve as a body of thought leaders who will advance and amplify SPRC's strategic goals. SPRC advances effective suicide prevention nationwide through free consultation, training, and tools for community organizations and coalitions; workplaces; state and Tribal leaders; health/behavioral health systems; professionals and professional education programs; and national public and private partners.

Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D. (mdelphin-rittmon@ahpnet.com)

Dr. Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon is Vice President of Programs with Advocates for Human Potential, Inc., where she oversees the Center for Training, Technical Assistance, and Consultation and the Research and Evaluation Department in providing behavioral health consultation across the country. She previously served as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), where she helped advance national behavioral health priorities, including standing up the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and supporting expanded naloxone distribution that contributed to the first reduction in overdose deaths in more than five years.

Dr. Delphin-Rittmon also served as Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services from 2015 to 2021, promoting recovery-oriented, integrated, and culturally responsive services and systems. She spent 22 years on the faculty at Yale University School of Medicine and is currently an Adjunct Associate Professor at Yale where she previously served as Director of Cultural Competence and Health Disparities Research and Consultation with the Program for Recovery and Community Health. A former White House appointee and Senior Advisor to the SAMHSA Administrator, she has received numerous honors, including the 2025 Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Yale Department of Psychiatry, the 2024 Visionary Leadership Award from the American Psychiatric Association, and the 2023 Children's Mental Health Champion Award from the Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. She earned her B.A. in Social Science from Hofstra University, her M.S. and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Purdue University and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in clinical community psychology at Yale University.

Justin Volpe, C.R.P.S-A., C.I.T. (justin.volpe@nasmhpd.org)

Justin is an international consultant, advocate, and peer specialist based out of Miami, FL. He has presented and trained mental health facilities and other organizations on trauma informed care practices and used his life experiences as lessons to what appropriate care should look like from a community level. Previously before his role with NASMHPD, Justin worked as a Jail Diversion Peer Liaison for the 11th Judicial Criminal Mental Health Project for 14 years. He has worked as a Certified Recovery Peer Specialist in Florida since 2008 and has extensive work experience in the community. Justin has supervised and coordinated thousands of engagements with participants with serious mental health and co-occurring issues in the criminal justice system. He has assisted in training 4,000 Miami Dade Law Enforcement Officers in Crisis Intervention Team Training. His passion for this work is based on bringing systems together locally and nationally while reducing stigma and advocating for the persons served. Justin has been in two PBS documentaries, *The Definition of Insanity*, (2020) with his experience with the Jail Diversion Program and the Ken Burns Documentary: “Hiding in Plain Sight” (2022) on youth mental health. He was published in the Washington Post in 2015 and has many other news appearances and published articles on his recovery journey.

Session 5: Sunday, July 26, 2026, from 2:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Eastern
The Abnormal Movements Screening Initiative

Brian Sims, M.D. (brian.sims@nasmhpd.org)

Dr. Brian Sims is the Senior Director of Medical and Behavioral Health for the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. He is also a Senior Consultant for NASMHPD’s Center for Innovation in Behavioral Health Policy and Practice, formerly known as the National Center for Trauma Informed Care (NCTIC), where he provides lectures and trainings both nationally and internationally on the practice of Trauma-Informed Care and the neurobiology of trauma. Most recently, he has been the lead consultant for Trauma Informed Care in the Faith Based community. Dr. Sims is a former staff psychiatrist with Correctional Mental Health Services, an organization serving the mental health needs of inmates in 60 detention centers in 10 states, where he was responsible for the provision of care for more than 3,000 inmates. Before joining Correctional Mental Health Care Services, he was the Senior Director for Behavioral and Mental Health for Conmed Healthcare Management where he was responsible for the development of core strategic planning for the company’s correctional mental health provisions in 8 states.

Robert O.Cotes, M.D. (robert.o.cotes@emory.edu)

Robert O. Cotes, MD, is an Associate Professor at Emory University School of Medicine in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. He is Director of the Clinical & Research Program for Psychosis at Grady Health System, which comprises of two clinical programs: 1) PSTAR Clinic (Persistent Symptoms: Treatment, Assessment and Recovery) and 2) Project ARROW (Achieving Recovery through Resilience, Optimism, and Wellness). The PSTAR Clinic provides evidence-based, recovery-oriented care for individuals with persistent symptoms of psychosis, specializing in the use of clozapine. Project ARROW is a coordinated specialty care team for people experiencing first episode psychosis, offering comprehensive, person-centered care using a multidisciplinary approach. He is a member of the Clinical Expert Team for SMI Adviser (www.smiadviser.org), which is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and administered by the American Psychiatric Association. SMI Adviser provides evidence-based resources to clinicians, individuals with serious mental illness, and their families. Dr. Cotes is an investigator for multiple research studies focused on treatment options for psychosis. His research focuses on clozapine and early psychosis.

Robert O. Cotes, M.D., D.F.A.P.A. (robert.o.cotes@emory.edu)

Robert O. Cotes, MD, is a Professor at Emory University School of Medicine in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. Dr. Cotes is Chief of Psychiatry at Grady Health System. He is the

founder and Co-Director of the Clinical & Research Program for Psychosis at Grady Health System, which comprises of three clinical programs: 1) PSTAR, which provides evidence-based, recovery-oriented care for individuals with persistent symptoms of psychosis, specializing in the use of clozapine, and 2) Project ARROW, a coordinated specialty care team for people experiencing prodromal and early psychosis, and 3) Youth and Family TREE, a program for youth and young adults with co-occurring disorders. His research focuses on clozapine, pharmacologic and psychosocial interventions for people with schizophrenia, cardiometabolic side effects of antipsychotic medication, and understanding the potential for digital biomarkers in mental health. He is Editor-In-Chief of Community Mental Health Journal and serves on the NAMI Scientific Advisory Council.

Rin Koenig, M.S.Tech. (rin.koenig@nasmhpd.org)

Rin Koenig, M.S.Tech, is the Graphic Designer and Web Developer Manager for the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD). Specializing in digital communication for mental health nonprofits, Rin's technical expertise is deeply informed by her own lived experience. Rin transitioned from disability to empowerment as a peer support specialist in 2017. Her firsthand experience with the mental health system—including psychosis and suicidal depression—brings a vital, personal perspective to her work. Rin holds a Master of Science in Technology in Graphic Information Technology, as well as Bachelor's degrees in Applied Computing and Interdisciplinary Arts and Performance, from Arizona State University.

Joseph Parks, M.D. (JoeP@TheNationalCouncil.org)

Dr. Parks currently serves as Principal Medical Advisor at The National Council for Mental Wellbeing and Chief Medical Officer for firsthand. He is a Distinguished Research Professor of Science at Missouri Institute of Mental Health with the University of Missouri, St. Louis. He practices outpatient psychiatry at Compass Health Network, a Certified Community Behavioral Health Center and federally funded community health center in Columbia Missouri.

He previously served as the Director of Missouri MO HealthNet Division (Missouri Medicaid) in the Missouri Department of Social Services. He was also Medical Director for the Missouri Department of Mental Health in Jefferson City and the Division Director for the Division of Comprehensive Psychiatric Services. Dr. Parks has conducted research and published in the areas of implementation of evidence-based medicine, pharmacy utilization management, integration of behavioral healthcare with general healthcare, and health care policy. He previously served as the national behavioral health representative at large for The Joint Commission. He has received numerous awards for improving the quality of care and leadership.

Sheri Dawson, R.N. (sheri.dawson@nasmhpd.org)

Sheri Dawson, R.N., graduated from Bryan School of Nursing and Nebraska Wesleyan University. She has devoted most of her professional career to the prevention, treatment, and recovery of individuals with mental illness and/or substance use disorders. Providing integrated healthcare, where every nurse is a behavioral health nurse, is a passion. Sheri Dawson brings a wealth of experience to the behavioral health field, with 43 years of healthcare experience and 38 years specifically in behavioral health. She served 21 years at the Nebraska DHHS in public health and the Division of Behavioral Health in various roles, including Deputy Director and two terms as Director. While Director, she served on the NASMHPD board of directors as President and the Region VII representative to the NASADAD board of directors. She also served on the NRI board of directors. This experience is a testament to her deep understanding of the field and her commitment to making a difference.

Sheri joined the NASMHPD team as a Senior Behavioral Health Advisor in October 2023. Sheri has experience in community behavioral health, integrated co-occurring healthcare, community-based hospitals, systems of care, state hospitals, regulation and licensure, and data and quality performance. Sheri is deeply committed to ensuring that behavioral health is not just a part of the healthcare conversation but a normalized and integrated aspect. She believes that connecting those experiencing distress and helping them begin the healing process should be a top priority for the nation. Sheri believes in building strong partnerships and trusting the journey.

Session 6: Sunday, July 26, 2026, from 3:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Eastern ***Rural Health Transformation Initiative***

David Miller, M.P.Aff. (david.miller@nasmhpd.org)

David Miller, MPAff, Senior Operations and Project Director, NASMHPD, has fourteen (14) years of direct state government experience and twenty-two (22) years working at the federal level. Mr. Miller has experience in delivering and directing a variety of multi-million-dollar technical assistance projects to state and local entities related to behavioral health service delivery systems, including: SAMHSA's *Transformation Transfer Initiative* (to enhance state systems to advance recovery practices), the *Technical Assistance Coalition* project (which entails coordination with nine (9) national behavioral health organizations), and *Children's MH Systems of Care Social Marketing* project (delivering social marketing technical assistance to all of SAMHSA's System of Care sites). Mr. Miller serves as Association lead, or co-lead, on policy and technical assistance relating to the issues of Housing, Employment, Whole Health Integration, Olmstead Litigation, Children and Families, Co-Occurring MH/IDD Coordination, Peer Support Services, and Criminal Justice. He supports and directs NASMHPD's Children, Youth, and Families Division, Housing Division, Housing Division, and Legal Division. Prior to coming to NASMHPD, Mr. Miller served as a division director in the Texas Governor's Office and the Executive Assistant to the Texas Board of MHMR, where he was the liaison between the Commissioner, agency, and a 9-member operating board appointed by the governor. Mr. Miller holds a Master of Public Affairs degree from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin.

Pierluigi Mancini, Ph.D. (pmancini@mhanational.org)

Dr. Pierluigi Mancini is the interim president and chief executive officer (CEO) of Mental Health America (MHA). In this role, Dr. Mancini is responsible for leading MHA's national strategy, supporting MHA's staff and network of over 130 affiliates, strengthening key partnerships, and guiding the organization through a critical period of growth, advocacy, and leadership transition. Prior to this role, Dr. Mancini served as MHA board chair. As a psychologist and respected voice in behavioral health for more than three decades, Dr. Mancini is recognized nationally and internationally for his pioneering work in cultural and linguistic responsiveness, immigrant behavioral health, and expanding access to care. His leadership at MHA is grounded in a lifelong commitment to ensuring that health care systems — and the policies that shape them — reflect the needs, languages, and experiences of people with mental health and substance use conditions.

Heather Gotham, Ph.D. (gothamh@stanford.edu)

Heather Gotham, PhD, licensed clinical psychologist and Clinical Professor, Stanford University School of Medicine, works with behavioral health and healthcare providers to improve access to effective mental health and addiction treatment. Her research uses implementation science to assist behavioral health providers in utilizing evidence-based treatments at national, state, and local levels. Dr. Gotham is PI/Director of the SAMHSA-funded national Center for Mental Health Implementation Support (CMHIS), which supports the implementation of evidence-based mental health prevention, treatment, and recovery support practices across US states and territories. She is also Co-Director of the National Institute on Drug

Abuse (NIDA)-funded Helping End Addiction Long-Term Data2Action (HD2A) Research Adoption Support Center (RASC) that aims to improve the implementation research capacity of opioid use disorder and pain management research projects to increase the chances for anyone, anywhere to receive the best possible treatment for addiction and pain-related conditions. And, Dr. Gotham is a multiple PI on an NIAAA funded hybrid type 1 implementation study of the use of screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment in sexual and reproductive health clinics. Dr. Gotham has significant experience in clinical teaching and training behavioral health and health care students and professionals, including directing the national coordinating office for the SAMHSA-funded Mental Health Technology Transfer Network. She led two SAMHSA-funded SBIRT health professions training grants. She has designed curricula and provided training and technical assistance to behavioral health and health professionals on treatments for adult and adolescent substance use disorders, implementing EBPs into behavioral health settings, co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, integrating behavioral and primary healthcare, and SBIRT.

Thomas Janousek, Psy.D. (Thomas.Janousek@nebraska.gov)

Dr. Thomas Janousek (Jan – oh – sek) is a licensed psychologist and the Director of Behavioral Health for the state of Nebraska. He is a trained neuropsychologist and is an expert in psychological testing working in outpatient, community mental health and hospital settings. Prior to his time at the state of Nebraska, he has served as the Vice President of Quality and Compliance for Burrell Behavioral Health in Springfield, Missouri where he oversaw Quality Improvement, Compliance Operations, and Risk Management.

Ragen Latham (ragen.latham2@wyo.gov)

Ragen Latham is a dedicated Senior Administrator with over 20 years of experience in healthcare operations, public policy, and organizational compliance. As the Behavioral Health Division Senior Administrator for the Wyoming Department of Health, Ragen provides strategic leadership for a range of programs, including mental health and substance use services, early intervention and education programs, and oversight of Wyoming's safety-net facilities. These facilities include the Wyoming State Hospital and the Wyoming Life Resource Center, which functions as both an Intermediate Care Facility and a Skilled Nursing Facility. As a member of the Department's senior leadership team, Ragen also serves as a key legislative liaison, leveraging expertise in fiscal management and policy development to enhance the division's success. Ragen holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science and Sociology and is a Certified Public Manager.

Session 7: Sunday, July 26, 2026, from 4:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Eastern
Strategies for Staying in Care by Enhancing Engagement

Ann Marie Sullivan, M.D. (ann.sullivan@omh.ny.gov)

Ann Sullivan has served as NYS Mental Health Commissioner since 2014, making her currently the longest tenured State Commissioner. She is responsible for ensuring the viability and effectiveness of the public mental health system that serves over 800,000 individuals including 23 State-operated psychiatric centers providing inpatient and community-based services. Under her leadership, OMH is implementing Governor Kathy Hochul's landmark plan to transform the state's mental health system and expand access to care for all New Yorkers. To date, this initiative has invested more than \$2 billion into dramatically expanding services, supports, and capacity across the state.

During her tenure, Dr. Sullivan has worked tirelessly to build a robust continuum of mental health services across the lifespan from prevention to intensive treatment for complex needs. Expanding access to care has involved the implementation and expansion of programs such as the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, addressing reimbursement barriers and expanding network adequacy, to the continuous

development of residential units – now totaling over 51,000. Advancing efforts to provide integrated care has been a priority for Dr. Sullivan throughout her career.

Previously, Dr. Sullivan served as senior vice president for the Queens Health Network of NYC Health + Hospitals, and director of psychiatry at Elmhurst and Queens Hospitals. She has taught, lectured, and published on best practices in community care and is an active mental health advocate.

Debra A. Pinals, M.D. (debra.pinals@nasmhpd.org)

Dr. Debra A. Pinals has been from 2016 to 2023 the Director of the Program in Psychiatry, Law, & Ethics and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Michigan Medical School and Clinical Adjunct Professor at the University of Michigan Law School. She has also served as the Medical Director of Behavioral Health and Forensic Programs for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Pinals was appointed as the Assistant Commissioner of Forensic Services from 2008 to 2016 and the Interim State Medical Director from 2012-2013 for the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health. She has worked in outpatient, inpatient settings, forensic and correctional facilities, emergency rooms and court clinics, has received public service awards and has been an expert witness in many cases. She is Board Certified in Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, and Addiction Medicine. During her career she has consulted on complex systems cases for people with mental illness, substance use disorder, and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities who are receiving treatment or support in various places- such as in state hospitals, community and justice and forensic settings. She teaches and publishes extensively and has led and consulted on numerous federal grants including those related to opioids, juvenile justice, and behavioral health and justice partnerships. Recently she has been a lead subject matter expert on issues pertaining to competence to stand trial for the SAMHSA GAINS Center. She is a past President of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, current Chair of the American Psychiatric Association Council on Psychiatry and the Law, and past Chair of the Forensic Division and current Chair of the Medical Directors Division for the National Association for State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD). In her work with NASMHPD, she is the Sr. Medical & Forensic Advisor/Editor-in-Chief and has co-authored key policy papers including “Beyond Beds: The Vital Role of a Full Continuum of Psychiatric Care” and “The Vital Role of Specialized Approaches: Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in the Mental Health System.

Paul Grant, Ph.D. (pgrant@beckinstitute.org)

Paul Grant, Ph.D., is Director of the Beck Institute Center for Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R). With Aaron T. Beck, he originated CT-R as a collaboration with providers, families, and individuals with lived experience primarily from North and West Philadelphia. Originally developed for individuals given a serious mental health condition diagnosis such as schizophrenia, CT-R is a new form of cognitive behavioral therapy that provides multidisciplinary staff concrete, actionable steps to promote recovery and resiliency for a range of challenges, including justice-involvement, substance use, physical health, and mental health. Dr. Grant has spearheaded CT-R implementation efforts within state and municipal systems, including forensic and civil hospitals, jails and prisons, acute hospital units, programmatic residences, supportive housing, outpatient mental health clinics, community-based teams, problem-solving courts. Within these settings, the vast majority of providers and beneficiaries come from impoverished urban and rural areas. Dr. Grant developed group, family, milieu, and forensic re-entry CT-R approaches. He has created innovative implementation tools and is involved in researching positive beliefs and teamwide culture change as mediators of successful CT-R outcomes. He is the co-author of Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy for Serious Mental Health Conditions, Schizophrenia: Cognitive Theory, Research, and Therapy, and sole author of the forthcoming Thriving Together Through Schizophrenia.

Lindsey Pinto, L.S.W. (lpinto@beckinstitute.org)

Lindsey Pinto, LSW, is a licensed Social Worker at the Beck Institute Center for Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R). Educated at Simmons University, Ms. Pinto completed two master's level internships at the Massachusetts Correctional Center for Women and the Worcester Recovery Center and Hospital, where she focused primarily on treatment and recovery practices for individuals with serious mental illness who are involved in the justice system. Ms. Pinto worked for several years at the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health conducting comprehensive assessments for justice-involved individuals who were receiving treatment at the state psychiatric hospital, or at the Philadelphia Department of Prisons. She is the co-author on several manuscripts detailing the application of CT-R in forensic settings and throughout justice systems. Ms. Pinto is interested in working with social workers and multidisciplinary providers to implement strength-based and recovery-oriented care to individuals across the justice system.

Joan Gillece, Ph.D. (joan.gillece@nasmhpd.org)

Dr. Gillece has 40+ years of experience working in the behavioral health field, specializing in systems transformation through the implementation of trauma informed responses and the prevention of seclusion and restraint. As director of NASMHPD's Center for Innovation in Behavioral Health Policy and Practice, she oversees contracts and provides technical assistance and training, helping transform systems across various disciplines including mental health, substance abuse, adult and juvenile justice and homeless services through various federal, state, local, and private contracts. She has overseen partnerships with SAMHSA's National Center for Trauma Informed Care, US DOJ Office of Victims of Crime services to underserved populations, MD Department of Juvenile Justice, DC and NY Department of Corrections, California Department of Behavioral Health, Casey Family Programs, Baltimore City Health Department and many more. She is currently implementing a violence prevention program in DC Department of Corrections, developing a trauma focused initiative for DC Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, and providing on going support to staff in several public psychiatric hospitals. She champions the cause of full consumer integration in the development of culturally competent programs. Dr. Gillece is committed to strength-based support by implementing trauma informed values with the overarching theme of healing. Prior to joining the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) in 2005, Dr. Gillece served as Director of Special Populations for Maryland's Mental Hygiene Administration.

Session 8: Monday, July 27, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Eastern
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Update

Timothy Westlake, M.D., Chief of Staff, SAMHSA

Dr. Timothy W. Westlake serves as Chief of Staff at SAMHSA, supporting agency leadership and operations that advance national mental health and substance use priorities. He is a board-certified emergency physician with more than 25 years of clinical experience practicing community emergency medicine, having led federal and state policy efforts addressing the opioid and fentanyl crisis informed by over 29 years personal long-term recovery and a commitment to integrative approaches that support resilience and wellness.

Dr. Westlake played a central role in the development of fentanyl-related substance class scheduling policy, originating the initial legislative framework in Wisconsin in 2016 and contributing to its evolution through enactment in federal law as the HALT Fentanyl Act in 2025. He also drafted the Department of Veterans Affairs prescription opioid reform provisions included in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA).

At the state level, Dr. Westlake served as Chair of the Wisconsin Medical Examining Board and as a member of the Wisconsin Controlled Substances Board. He was the physician architect of Wisconsin's prescription opioid reform strategy and served on the Governor's Task Force on Opioid Abuse. He coauthored and edited

the Wisconsin Medical Examining Board Opioid Prescribing Guidelines and founded the Wisconsin Coalition for Prescription Drug Abuse Reduction.

Dr. Westlake received his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin, his Doctor of Medicine from the Medical College of Wisconsin and completed his residency in emergency medicine at Eastern Virginia Medical School. He has been a Gracie jiu jitsu black belt instructor and yoga practitioner since 2008. He has been married to his wife, Richele, for 31 years and is a proud father of two daughters.

RDML Christopher M. Jones, Pharm.D., Dr. P.H., M.P.H.

Christopher M. Jones, Pharm.D., Dr.P.H., M.P.H. (Rear Admiral, U.S. Public Health Service), is the Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) and Acting Director of the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality (CBHSQ). Rear Admiral Jones brings a wealth of experience to SAMHSA having led substance use, mental health, and injury prevention policy, program, and research activities for nearly two decades. Prior to becoming Director of CSAP, Rear Admiral Jones served as the director of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In this role, he provided scientific leadership and overall management of the Center, including driving the Center's strategic direction and advancing the Center's priorities. At CDC, Rear Admiral Jones previously served as Deputy Director of the Injury Center and as Associate Director for Strategy and Innovation.

During his career, Rear Admiral Jones has served in a variety of leadership roles in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Among these roles, he served as the first director of the National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory at SAMHSA, as the acting Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Science and Data Policy and director of the Division of Science Policy in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) at HHS, and senior advisor in the Office of the Commissioner at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Rear Admiral Jones received a Bachelor of Science degree from Reinhardt College, a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Mercer University, a Master of Public Health degree from New York Medical College, and a Doctor of Public Health in Health Policy from The George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health. Dr. Jones is a Rear Admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service and has authored more than 200 peer-reviewed publications on the topics of substance use, drug overdose, mental health, and injury prevention.

Tison Thomas, M.S.W., L.M.S.W.

Tison Thomas, M.S.W., serves as the Acting Director and Deputy Director of the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). In this dual capacity, Mr. Thomas leads national efforts to enhance the behavioral health system, expand access to evidence-based services, and strengthen federal and community responses to mental health and co-occurring substance use challenges. His leadership is integral to CMHS's mission of promoting the prevention and treatment of mental illnesses, including serious mental illness (SMI) and serious emotional disturbances (SED).

With over 30 years of experience in behavioral health across federal, state, and local levels, Mr. Thomas has successfully directed large-scale grant programs, managed multidisciplinary teams, and spearheaded transformative initiatives in mental health policy, service delivery, and systems of care. His career is dedicated to improving outcomes for individuals with SMI, co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders, and those with complex behavioral health needs. Previously, Mr. Thomas served as the Director of CMHS's Division of State and Community Systems Development, where he oversaw major funding initiatives such as the Mental Health Block Grant, Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness

(PATH), and the Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC) grant. These programs are vital in supporting services for individuals with SMI, SED, and substance use challenges.

Before joining SAMHSA, Mr. Thomas held various leadership positions at the state level, directing initiatives to implement evidence-based practices in public systems serving individuals with mental illness, substance use disorders, and co-occurring conditions. His extensive career includes leadership roles in managed care, homelessness programs, Medicaid behavioral health, and clinical service settings. Mr. Thomas holds a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in social work.

Session 9: Monday, July 27, 2026, from 10:50 a.m. – 11:35 a.m. Eastern
Current Research, Regulatory, and Policy Considerations Regarding Psychedelics as Medicine

Ann Marie Sullivan, M.D. (ann.sullivan@omh.ny.gov)

Dr. Sullivan has served as Commissioner for the New York State Office of Mental Health since 2014. She is responsible for implementing Governor Kathy Hochul's landmark plan to transform the state's mental health system and expand access to care for all New Yorkers. To date, this initiative has invested more than \$2 billion into dramatically expanding services, supports, and capacity across the state. Under Dr. Sullivan's leadership, the mental health system in New York serves over 800,000 individuals each year and provides over 53,000 units of supportive housing for individuals living with mental illness. She has expanded preventive services for youth and families, increased the availability of treatment services across the lifespan and provided individuals living with serious mental illness the intensive supports and treatment needed to thrive in their communities.

Dr. Sullivan has focused on ensuring integrated care throughout the mental health system, addressing the stigma around mental health, fostering equity and inclusion and incorporating the presence of peers with lived experience throughout the service system. A few major initiatives during her tenure include the implementation of 988 and expansion of crisis services across the state, a focus on school based mental health services for our youth and a comprehensive engagement and housing program for individuals with serious mental illness living unsheltered in the community. Dr. Sullivan previously served as senior vice president for the Queens Health Network of New York City Health and Hospitals, and Director of Psychiatry at Elmhurst and Queens Hospitals where she developed a comprehensive inpatient and ambulatory psychiatric service system, youth programs, substance use services, mobile outreach, and school-based programs.

A native of Queens, Dr. Sullivan graduated from New York University's Washington Square College and it's School of Medicine. She completed her Psychiatric Residency at New York University/Bellevue Hospital. She has taught, lectured, and published on best practices in community care and is an active advocate for her patients and her profession. She is a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and has served as the speaker of the American Psychiatric Association's Assembly and on its Board of Trustees. She is a clinical professor at the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, and a member of the American College of Psychiatrists.

Peter S. Hendricks, Ph.D. (pshendricks@uabmc.edu)

Dr. Hendricks is currently researching the use of psilocybin to see if it will help individuals addicted to cocaine stop using the harmful drug. He theorizes that psilocybin, which is the active compound found in Psilocybe mushrooms, also known as "magic mushrooms," will work from the angles: biochemical,

psychological and transcendental/spiritual. Hendricks is able to talk about his research as well as novel and more effective treatments for substance abuse dependence, with specific areas of focus on tobacco, cocaine and polysubstance abuse in vulnerable populations.

Rachel Talley, M.D. (rachel.talley@maryland.gov)

Dr. Rachel Talley currently serves as Deputy Secretary for the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA). A board-certified psychiatrist committed to the development of high-quality, equitable systems for individuals with complex behavioral health needs, Dr. Talley joined MDH as BHA Chief Medical Officer in July 2024. Prior to joining MDH, Dr. Talley served as Director of the University of Pennsylvania Center of Excellence in Public Psychiatry, overseeing the expansion of public psychiatry training and community-academic partnerships within the Department of Psychiatry. She holds an adjunct faculty appointment as Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania.

Her clinical and academic career has focused on the care of individuals with serious and persistent mental illness, including prior roles providing direct services in community mental health settings in Philadelphia and New York City. She has published several peer-reviewed articles and presented regionally and nationally on health services issues related to the care of individuals with serious and persistent mental illness. Her contributions to public mental health leadership and policy include serving on an ad hoc committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine on Strategies to Improve Access to Behavioral Health Care Services through Medicare and Medicaid, and membership on the National Council for Mental Wellbeing Medical Director Institute.

Dr. Talley received her B.A. from Harvard University and her M.D. from Stanford University School of Medicine. She completed adult psychiatry residency training and public psychiatry fellowship at New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Irving Medical Center/New York State Psychiatric Institute. Prior recognition for her teaching and leadership in community mental health includes receipt of the University of Pennsylvania Department of Psychiatry Albert Stunkard Faculty Recognition Award (2021, 2022, 2023) and receipt of the 2021 Larry A. Real Award from the Montgomery County PA chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

Session 10: Monday, July 27, 2026, from 11:35 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. Eastern
Expanding Access to Brain Stimulation Therapies for Serious Mental Illness

Debra A. Pinals, M.D. (debra.pinals@nasmhpd.org)

Dr. Debra A. Pinals has been from 2016 to 2023 the Director of the Program in Psychiatry, Law, & Ethics and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Michigan Medical School and Clinical Adjunct Professor at the University of Michigan Law School. She has also served as the Medical Director of Behavioral Health and Forensic Programs for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Pinals was appointed as the Assistant Commissioner of Forensic Services from 2008 to 2016 and the Interim State Medical Director from 2012-2013 for the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health. She has worked in outpatient, inpatient settings, forensic and correctional facilities, emergency rooms and court clinics, has received public service awards and has been an expert witness in many cases. She is Board Certified in Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry, and Addiction Medicine. During her career she has consulted on complex systems cases for people with mental illness, substance use disorder, and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities who are receiving treatment or support in various places- such as in state hospitals, community and justice and forensic settings. She teaches and publishes extensively and has led and consulted on numerous federal grants including those related to opioids, juvenile justice, and behavioral health and justice partnerships. Recently she has been a lead subject matter expert on issues pertaining to competence to stand trial for the SAMHSA GAINS Center. She is a past President of the American

Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, current Chair of the American Psychiatric Association Council on Psychiatry and the Law, and past Chair of the Forensic Division and current Chair of the Medical Directors Division for the National Association for State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD). In her work with NASMHPD, she is the Sr. Medical & Forensic Advisor/Editor-in-Chief and has co-authored key policy papers including “Beyond Beds: The Vital Role of a Full Continuum of Psychiatric Care” and “The Vital Role of Specialized Approaches: Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in the Mental Health System.

Joseph J. Taylor, M.D., Ph.D. (jtaylor61@bwh.harvard.edu)

Dr. Taylor is a neuroscientist and Board-certified psychiatrist with expertise in brain stimulation and interventional psychiatry. He is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and the Jonathan F. Borus, MD Endowed Chair in Psychiatry at Mass General Brigham (MGB). He also serves as Medical Director of TMS in the Center for Brain Circuit Therapeutics, Director of Noninvasive Neuromodulation Clinical Trials, Director of the Interventional Psychiatry Research Program, and Associate Program Director and Research Track Co-Director of the Psychiatry Residency Program at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Taylor’s research focuses on developing and testing brain circuit interventions for neuropsychiatric illness. His work identifies candidate treatment targets through connectome-based network mapping and tests these targets prospectively in clinical trials of brain stimulation. Throughout his career, Dr. Taylor has received research funding from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the National Institutes of Health, the Sidney R. Baer, Jr. Foundation, the Baszucki Group, the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation, the Home Base Foundation, Harvard Medical School, and Mass General Brigham.

Robert Eilers, M.D. (robert.eilers@dhs.nj.gov)

Dr. Robert Eilers is the Medical Director at the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). He is Board-certified in adult psychiatry with subspecialty certification in administrative psychiatry and forensic psychiatry. He received his M.D. from Thomas Jefferson College of Medicine, Philadelphia, PA, and his M.P.H. from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD.

Session 11: Monday, July 27, 2026, from 12:50 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Eastern
Plenary Lunch

Christy Malik, M.S.W. (chrsity.malik@nasmhpd.org)

Christine Malik, MSW, is a Project Director for the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) where she oversees and manages multiple federally funded contracts related to suicide prevention, crisis services, 988 implementation, behavioral health service delivery, and older adult behavioral health. In her role, she provides behavioral health training, technical assistance, strategic planning, and policy analysis to State Mental Health Authority administrators, federal partners, and key stakeholders to advance the transformation of public behavioral health systems. Ms. Malik also manages NASMHPD’s Older Persons Division to address the unique behavioral health needs commonly impacting older adults with complex co-occurring conditions. She collaborates with states to strengthen behavioral health policies, improve service delivery, and promote evidence-based practices that enhance quality of life for older adults. Ms. Malik received her Master of Social Work and graduate certification in gerontology from George Mason University.

Action Alliance

Richard McKeon, Ph.D. (RMckeon@edc.org)

Dr. Richard McKeon serves as the Deputy Director for Strategy at the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention, where he provides strategic leadership to advance national suicide prevention efforts. Prior to this role, he dedicated more than two decades to federal service, including 12 years as Chief of the Suicide Prevention Branch and later as Senior Advisor for the 988 and Behavioral Health Crisis Coordinating Office at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Throughout his career, Dr. McKeon has been a leading voice in strengthening the nation's behavioral health crisis response system.

Dr. McKeon has played a pivotal role in shaping suicide prevention policy and practice in the United States. He was instrumental in the development of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, co-led the creation of the 2012 and 2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention, and helped establish the Zero Suicide grant program to improve suicide care across health systems. He has also collaborated extensively with federal agencies to reduce suicide among service members and veterans. Dr. McKeon holds a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Arizona and a Master of Public Health from Columbia University.

Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)

Jenna Heise, M.A., N.B.C.C. (jennaheise@ou.edu)

Jenna Heise is the executive director of the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC). With three decades of experience in behavioral health and prevention, she has served as a counselor, trainer, policy analyst, and administrator. Her leadership is grounded in her suicide-centered lived experience, which informs her commitment to improving systems of care.

A nationally recognized expert in suicide prevention, Heise has partnered with local, state, Tribal, federal, and national organizations to strengthen programs, shape policy, and develop tools and frameworks that advance the field. She has played a key role in designing and implementing innovative, evidence-based approaches across health care systems; comprehensive school-based youth suicide prevention programs; and initiatives that enhance wellness and upstream mental health for first responders, veterans, construction industry workers, and corrections officers.

Heise has also been active in suicide prevention education for many years. In addition to presenting at conferences and symposia, she has co-authored peer-reviewed research articles focused on suicide prevention among veterans and developed toolkits, training and educational videos, and web content to support suicide prevention in a variety of contexts.

Heise holds an MA from Drexel University. She is a national board-certified counselor as well as a board-certified dance/movement therapist. She has been a SAMHSA peer reviewer and project director, and she previously collaborated with the Zero Suicide Institute. Heise has received numerous leadership and outstanding achievement awards over the course of her career in suicide prevention. An artist at heart, Heise lives with her two sons and family dog in Austin, Texas.

Zero Suicide

Brandon J. Johnson, M.H.S., M.C.H.E.S.

Brandon J. Johnson is a tireless advocate for positive mental health and suicide prevention services for youth and adults across the country. Brandon earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from Morgan State University in 2008 and a Master of Health Science Degree from Johns Hopkins University in 2012. In 2020, Brandon earned the Master Certified Health Education Specialist (MCHES) credential from the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing. Currently, he serves as the Branch Chief of the Suicide Prevention Branch in the Substance Abuse

Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS). In this role, Brandon oversees the suicide prevention portfolio of the agency, which includes nine grant programs, and a host of special projects and initiatives created to reduce suicide deaths and attempts in America. In his previous role, Brandon served as a Government Project Officer (GPO) for various suicide prevention grant programs that respectively target youth, adults, and health care systems. Brandon serves as the subject matter expert in suicide among Black people and leads SAMHSA's Black Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative, which was created to reduce suicidal ideation, attempts, and deaths among Black youth and young adults between the ages of 5-24. Brandon was the SAMHSA representative on the HHS Report to Congress on African American Youth Suicide, released to the public in March 2020. Previously, Brandon served as the Director of Suicide and Violence Prevention for the State of Maryland.

Julie Goldstein Grumet, Ph.D. (JGoldstein@edc.org)

Dr. Goldstein Grumet is Vice President for Suicide Prevention Strategy and Director of the Zero Suicide Institute at the Education Development Center (EDC) and serves as Senior Health Care Advisor for the federally-funded Suicide Prevention Resource Center. She directs the Zero Suicide movement nationally, providing strategic guidance for the establishment and evolution of the framework since its launch in 2012. She leads the development of the resources that enable the effective implementation and dissemination of this framework throughout health care systems nationally and internationally. Dr. Goldstein Grumet integrates comprehensive suicide prevention approaches across sectors, settings, and ages and delivers solutions that address shared risk factors to improve long-term mental health and well-being for individuals. Dr. Goldstein Grumet has expertise in behavioral health transformation, state and local community suicide prevention, quality improvement, school mental health, and the use of evidence-based practices for suicide care.

Updates from Vibrant Emotional Health on 988

Wendy Martinez Farmer, L.P.C., M.B.A. (wmartinez-farmer@vibrant.org)

Wendy Martinez Farmer, LPC, MBA (she/her) is the VP, 988 Strategy, Grants and Clinical Standards. Wendy Martinez Farmer is a licensed professional counselor with over 26 years of crisis experience in the public and private sectors, Wendy holds a Master of Science in Clinical Psychology from Marquette University and a MBA from Georgia Southern University. Since April of 2024 she has served as the Vice President for 988 Strategy, Grants and Clinical Standards, responsible for 988 program leadership, strategic management, financial oversight and clinical leadership for Vibrant as the 988 Lifeline administrator. Prior to joining the 988 Lifeline team, Wendy held positions as the RVP for the Crisis Center of Excellence at Caredon Behavioral Health and the President and CEO of Behavioral Health Link in Atlanta, where she oversaw daily operations of the statewide line as well as 24/7 mobile crisis response services in 104 Georgia counties. A suicide prevention leader, she sat on the Standards Training and Practice Committee for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline from 2016 to 2019 and has been a member of the Care Transitions Workgroup with the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention since 2018. She continues to serve as a member of the Autism and Suicide Workgroup. She served on the Board of Directors for NAMI Georgia from 2020-2023 and also belongs to the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals. Wendy is passionate about ensuring that individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis receive the same predictable care that individuals with medical emergencies receive. "The response to chest pain is predictable no matter where you live. We demand it. This is not the case for behavioral health emergencies which can also be fatal. Unlike the bystanders and first responders who knew exactly what to do for a heart attack, for instance, our family, friends, coworkers and even medical professionals are much less likely to know what to do when the emergency is related to mental health or substance use." She is very invested in

the successful launch and ongoing oversight of 988 and believes that community collaboration and the connection between key crisis services are key to ensuring individuals receive lifesaving behavioral health care in their moment of need.

Lula Haile, M.S.W., L.C.S.W. (lhaille@vibrant.org)

Lula Haile, MSW, LCSW is a native of Atlanta, Georgia. Lula received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Georgia State University, followed by a Masters of Social Work from Clark Atlanta University. She has spent most of her professional career with the Department of Veterans Affairs, serving in a multitude of roles supporting Veteran suicide prevention initiatives. This includes serving as an Assistant Deputy Director for Crisis Operations at the Veterans Crisis Line where she played a key role in transitioning VCL to a fully remote environment as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Lula also oversaw significant growth and expansion efforts to support 988 -- which included a 50% increase in Crisis Operations staffing. These expansion efforts resulted in a 23% increase in VCL managed interactions (based on a pre-988 baseline) while maintaining KPI's. Currently Lula serves as the Vice President of 988 Operations and Network Engagement at Vibrant Emotional Health, where she ensures appropriate operational management and stakeholder support to 200+ Crisis Centers which make up the 988 Network. When she is not working, Lula enjoys traveling and spending time with family and friends.

**Session 13: Monday, July 27, 2026, from 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Eastern
988, Crisis Services and CCBHCs**

James Wright, M.S., L.P.C.

James Wright, M.S., LPC, is serving as the Acting Director of the 988 and Behavioral Health Crisis Coordinating Office (BHCCO) within the Office of the Assistant Secretary. He previously served as the Division Director of Crisis Operations, responsible for 988 transition and services since 2021, including oversight of the SAMHSA 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Administration, the 988 State and Territory, Tribal Response, and Crisis Center Follow-up grant programs. Mr. Wright was proud to represent SAMHSA and the work of the 988 and BHCCO office as one of the finalists for the 2023 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals.

Mr. Wright first came to SAMHSA in 2011 and served as a Government Project Officer (GPO) in the Suicide Prevention Branch in the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS). He was the GPO for the Suicide Prevention Lifeline before it became 988, Crisis Center Follow-Up grants, oversaw grants for the Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention program, and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center. He co-lead SAMHSA's Bullying Prevention efforts, including serving on the federal cross-agency initiative Stop Bullying, and was the CMHS lead for Traumatic Brain Injury and Health Information Technology.

Before coming back to SAMHSA on the 988 team, Mr. Wright held both the Deputy Director and Chief of Staff positions for the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL), overseeing all clinical and business operations for the VCL. Mr. Wright is a Licensed Professional Counselor and previously led psychiatric emergency services at Johns Hopkins Bayview and Austin Travis County Integral Care (ATCIC). At ATCIC, he co-developed the nation's first multi-center crisis chat service in collaboration with and served on the board of directors for CONTACT USA, currently named the International Council for Helplines. He holds a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor and M.S. in Counseling Psychology from Tarleton State University. Mr. Wright is proud to be a Veteran of the United States Army, serving both stateside and deployed in Bosnia in 1997.

David Covington, L.P.C., M.B.A. (david.covington@riinternational.com)

David W. Covington, LPC, MBA is a nationally recognized innovator in behavioral health crisis care. He is CEO and President of Recovery Innovations and Managing Partner at Behavioral Health Link, where he

co-developed the Georgia Crisis and Access Line. David co-founded the Crisis Now and Zero Suicide initiatives, shaping crisis systems across the U.S. and globally. He also produces Moving America's Soul on Suicide and co-hosts Lifelines: The 988 Podcast. A licensed professional counselor and award-winning leader, David continues to champion systems that respond with compassion, not handcuffs.

Brian Sims, M.D. (brian.sims@nasmhpd.org)

Dr. Brian Sims is the Senior Director of Medical and Behavioral Health for the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. He is also a Senior Consultant for NASMHPD's Center for Innovation in Behavioral Health Policy and Practice, formerly known as the National Center for Trauma Informed Care (NCTIC), where he provides lectures and trainings both nationally and internationally on the practice of Trauma-Informed Care and the neurobiology of trauma. Most recently, he has been the lead consultant for Trauma Informed Care in the Faith Based community. Dr. Sims is a former staff psychiatrist with Correctional Mental Health Services, an organization serving the mental health needs of inmates in 60 detention centers in 10 states, where he was responsible for the provision of care for more than 3,000 inmates. Before joining Correctional Mental Health Care Services, he was the Senior Director for Behavioral and Mental Health for Conmed Healthcare Management where he was responsible for the development of core strategic planning for the company's correctional mental health provisions in 8 states.

Hannah Wesolowski (Hwesolowski@nami.org)

Hannah Wesolowski leads NAMI National's Government Relations, Policy & Advocacy team, which develops NAMI's policy positions, advances NAMI's federal public policy priorities, and supports the policy work of NAMI's Alliance at the state and local level. Hannah has been a national leader on topics like building a mental health crisis continuum of care since the launch of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline in 2022. Hannah serves as a member of NAMI's Executive Team and is a frequent NAMI spokesperson to the media on mental health policy topics, speaking frequently to outlets like NPR, The New York Times, The Washington Post, ABC News, and CNN. She serves on the Executive Committee of Friends of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and on the Board of Directors of the Public Affairs Council and the American Brain Coalition. Hannah has been with NAMI since 2017. Prior to NAMI, she worked for the Public Affairs Council, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, American Institute of Architects, and New York University. She earned both a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Public Administration from New York University.

Tom Betlach (Tom@Speirehcs.com)

Tom Betlach served as the Arizona Medicaid Director for almost 10 years where he reported directly to the Governor. Tom joined Speire Healthcare Strategies in 2019 as a partner to advise government and private sector clients on health policy and strategic initiatives. He is a nationally recognized thought leader on Medicaid and healthcare policy, known for his expertise in serving complex populations, delivery system transformation, value-based purchasing, managed care and cost containment. Tom served as both Vice President and President of the National Association of Medicaid Directors.

Nick Boukas, M.P.A. (Nick.Boukas@hsd.nm.gov)

Nick Boukas is the Director of Behavioral Health Services at the New Mexico Health Care Authority. Mr. Boukas has served in various roles in public service for city, county, regional and state government agencies and national organizations working with the CDC and other Federal agencies on policy and programs. He has been an invited speaker to national and regional conferences speaking on various topics ranging from workforce development to community engagement. Prior to his appointment in 2023, Mr. Boukas worked at the New Mexico Department of Health. His focus has been to strengthen the behavioral health system to make New Mexico a healthier place. He has a master's degree in public administration and lives in Santa Fe with his wife and dogs.

Pam Bennett L.C.S.W. (pbennett1@utah.gov)

Pam Bennett serves as the Utah State Mental Health Commissioner and the Assistant Director for the Utah Department of Health and Human Services Office of Substance Use and Mental Health. In this role, she oversees mental health, substance use disorder, and crisis services within the public mental health system. Prior to working for the Department of Health and Human Services, Pam was the Adult Team Lead for a rural Local Mental Health Authority, gaining extensive experience working with individuals with behavioral health and crisis issues. She is focused on addressing systemic barriers to treatment and supports for individuals with behavioral health struggles. Outside of work, Pam enjoys being outdoors with her husband, children, grandchildren, a great-grandchild (!) and a variety of pets.

Margie Balfour, M.D., Ph.D. (Margie.Balfour@connectionshs.com)

Dr. Margie Balfour is a psychiatrist and national leader in behavioral health crisis care. She is the founder of MultiPass Consulting and serves as Executive Policy Advisor at Connections Health Solutions, where she helped transform Tucson's Crisis Response Center into a nationally recognized model. Dr. Balfour is an Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Arizona and has contributed to national crisis care policy, including co-authoring the National Council for Mental Wellbeing's *Roadmap to the Ideal Crisis System* and helping develop SAMHSA's national crisis care standards. She earned her MD and PhD from the University of Cincinnati and completed residency and fellowship training in Community Psychiatry at UT Southwestern Medical Center.

James Otero (james.otero333@gmail.com)

James Otero is a pre-med student at Portland Community College pursuing a double major in Biology and Psychology, with a strong interest in mental health, crisis intervention, and helping others. As a volunteer with Lines for Life's YouthLine, he provides peer-to-peer crisis support through calls and text, applying specialized training in trauma-informed care, harm reduction, suicide prevention, crisis de-escalation, and support for survivors of sexual violence. He is experienced in maintaining accurate clinical documentation, practicing HIPAA compliance, and working within confidential, high-pressure environments. In addition to his volunteer work, James serves as a Training Mentor at Jamba Juice, where he has been recognized with the 2026 "Leave Your Mark" Award and is preparing for a management role. His professional experience reflects strong leadership, communication, and customer service skills, complemented by bilingual service experience and proficiency in multiple languages, including English, Spanish, Portuguese, Hindi, and Urdu. With a passion for learning, cultural engagement, and service, James is building a foundation for a future career in healthcare.

Wendy Martinez Farmer, L.P.C., M.B.A. (wmartinez-farmer@vibrant.org)

Wendy Martinez Farmer, LPC, MBA (she/her) is the VP, 988 Strategy, Grants and Clinical Standards. Wendy Martinez Farmer is a licensed professional counselor with over 26 years of crisis experience in the public and private sectors, Wendy holds a Master of Science in Clinical Psychology from Marquette University and a MBA from Georgia Southern University. Since April of 2024 she has served as the Vice President for 988 Strategy, Grants and Clinical Standards, responsible for 988 program leadership, strategic management, financial oversight and clinical leadership for Vibrant as the 988 Lifeline administrator. Prior to joining the 988 Lifeline team, Wendy held positions as the RVP for the Crisis Center of Excellence at Carelon Behavioral Health and the President and CEO of Behavioral Health Link in Atlanta, where she oversaw daily operations of the statewide line as well as 24/7 mobile crisis response services in 104 Georgia counties. A suicide prevention leader, she sat on the Standards Training and Practice Committee for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline from 2016 to 2019 and has been a member of the Care Transitions Workgroup with the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention since 2018. She continues to serve as a member of the Autism and Suicide Workgroup. She served on the Board of Directors for NAMI Georgia from 2020-2023 and also belongs to the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals. Wendy is

passionate about ensuring that individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis receive the same predictable care that individuals with medical emergencies receive. “The response to chest pain is predictable no matter where you live. We demand it. This is not the case for behavioral health emergencies which can also be fatal. Unlike the bystanders and first responders who knew exactly what to do for a heart attack, for instance, our family, friends, coworkers and even medical professionals are much less likely to know what to do when the emergency is related to mental health or substance use.” She is very invested in the successful launch and ongoing oversight of 988 and believes that community collaboration and the connection between key crisis services are key to ensuring individuals receive lifesaving behavioral health care in their moment of need.

Becky Stoll, L.C.S.W. (Becky.Stoll@centerstone.org)

Becky Stoll is the Executive Vice President of Crisis Services at Centerstone, a nonprofit health system specializing in mental health and substance use disorder treatments. Stoll is responsible for leading the Crisis Service Line for Centerstone’s multi-state footprint, including an enterprise crisis call center, state and national 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline call/chat/text centers, mobile crisis response teams, crisis walk-in centers and crisis stabilization and residential units.

Stoll has more than three decades of experience in crisis services, disaster mental health, and suicide prevention and has worked at Centerstone since 1999, previously holding the positions of vice president of crisis and disaster management, director of crisis services, and crisis call center program manager. Prior to joining Centerstone, she served as the Director of Admissions, Utilization Management and Social Work at First Hospital Corporation in Nashville, Tennessee.

Stoll is the co-chair of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Steering Committee, American Association of Suicidology Advisory Council, and a Chair Emeritus of the Board of Directors for the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation. Stoll’s work has been featured in Time Magazine, USA Today, The Washington Post and other major national publications. Stoll is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and holds a master’s degree in social work from the University of Tennessee, and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Tennessee State University.

Monica Johnson, M.A., L.P.C. (monica.johnson@healthmanagement.com)

Monica Johnson, MA, LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor) is a Managing Director for Behavioral Health at Health Management Associates (HMA) and a national leader in behavioral health crisis system transformation, including implementation of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. She advises state and local governments, providers, and partners on building coordinated crisis continuums—spanning call center operations, mobile crisis response, crisis stabilization, and ongoing service linkage—alongside sustainable financing, governance, performance measurement, and workforce strategies.

Prior to joining HMA, she served as the first formal national Director of the 988 & Behavioral Health Crisis Coordinating Office at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) within the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS). In this role, she led federal coordination and strategy supporting the nationwide launch of 988 and advancement of the broader behavioral health crisis continuum, including alignment across partners, implementation support for states and territories, and integration of crisis call centers with mobile crisis and crisis stabilization services.

Ms. Johnson has worked in behavioral health for more than 25 years, with deep experience in public-sector system leadership and crisis services. Before her federal appointment, she served as Interim Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). She previously held senior DBHDD leadership roles including Division Director for Behavioral Health, Community Mental Health Director, and Child & Adolescent Mental Health Director.

During her tenure at DBHDD, Ms. Johnson provided executive oversight across adult mental health, substance use, children and young adults, recovery supports, prevention, field operations, and crisis coordination. She managed a budget exceeding \$600 million and led statewide strategy, policy, and program development, including initiatives to strengthen crisis response capacity, improve access to care, and support system performance and workforce development. Over her career, she has led high-profile change initiatives, chaired multi-stakeholder collaborations, and served in governance roles supporting system improvement.

Ms. Johnson has also held clinical, management, and leadership roles in community behavioral health and has supported the design and implementation of federally funded initiatives. Her experience includes oversight of programs funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and U.S. Department of Education.

Ms. Johnson earned an undergraduate degree in Psychology (minor in Communications) from Kennesaw State University and a graduate degree in Professional Counseling / Psychology at Argosy University. Ms. Johnson is a proud Alumnus of the Georgetown University Leadership Academy and a recipient of the Intensive Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Schizophrenia Certification at the Aaron T. Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavior Therapy in Philadelphia. Ms. Johnson is also a proud fellow in the Milbank Memorial Fund Leadership Fellows Program.

Joanna Champney (Joanna.Champney@delaware.gov)

Joanna Champney is the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health at the Department of Health and Social Services. Prior to joining the Division, Champney served as Chief of Planning, Research & Reentry at the Delaware Department of Correction (DOC). During her tenure at DOC, Champney established and led the Department's new Office of Reentry following Governor Carney's issuance of Executive Order 27 to improve prisoner reentry. As part of the Governor's Executive Order, she served as a Commission member of the Delaware Correctional Reentry Commission (DCRC) and is currently Chairing the Commission's Transition Team. Champney's team expanded DOC's use of evidence-based practices, including implementation of cognitive behavioral therapy programming for incarcerated people, improving probationer and inmate assessment strategies, and creating an evidence-based release planning system for staff to utilize with individuals preparing to leave prison custody. The Planning Unit also managed all research and data projects for the DOC as well as accreditation and compliance activities for DOC's facilities. At DOC, Champney oversaw implementation of several large federal grants that supported system improvement, program evaluation, and cognitive behavioral therapy and vocational training for incarcerated people. In partnership with the Bureau of Prisons, Champney also implemented compliance tracking processes for provision of clinical care to incarcerated people who have mental illness. She also was instrumental in the recent redesign of the DOC's prison-based substance use disorder treatment program, Road to Recovery (R2R), which has now implemented modern, evidence-based set of curricula and has adopted a treatment track system to differentiate between levels of care.

Prior to joining state government, Joanna served as the Executive Director of the Delaware Center for Justice (DCJ), which serves a variety of justice-involved populations through direct services, advocacy and policy reform work. While at DCJ, she oversaw a combination of direct service programs and policy reform initiatives. Previously, she worked with a criminal defense law firm in Maryland and with a finance company in Delaware. She earned a Master's Degree in Criminology from the University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the University of Delaware.

Michelle Zabel, M.S.S. (michelle.zabel@uconn.edu)

Michelle Zabel, MSS, Associate Extension Professor and Executive Director of Innovations Institute at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work, brings 30+ years of leadership in public children's health and human services systems, including Medicaid systems. She has led a nationally recognized portfolio of translational research and implementation science initiatives that support states in their efforts to transform child- and family-serving systems. She has served as Principal Investigator on 97 projects totaling over \$100 million, including two influential CMS-funded initiatives such as Maryland's Community Alternatives to Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF) Demonstration Grant; a three-state CHIPRA collaborative to improve care for high-need Medicaid-enrolled children; Children's QSRI with MD DHS, and a Title IV-E Waiver Project also with MD DHS.

As PI and Project Director for SAMHSA's previous \$40+ million National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Children, Youth, and Family Mental Health (NTTAC) and is the Senior Advisor for SAMHSA current NTTAC, she led national technical expert panels and listening sessions with youth, families, and providers. She has advised multiple states on Medicaid and CHIP financing strategies, service array development, and system redesign, and was the original MACPAC Project Director for University of Maryland, Baltimore's MACPAC IDIQ Contract. She is highly skilled in convening cross-sector stakeholders, conducting environmental scans, and synthesizing complex data to inform public policy. Through the convening and facilitation of an expert panel, her leadership has been instrumental in the development of a continuum framework for children and youth, commissioned by SAMHSA, which included her facilitation of the National Children's Crisis Continuum Listening Sessions with SAMHSA grantees and stakeholder groups. Additionally, she plays a key role in shaping best practices for child and adolescent services within Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs), as exhibited by her facilitation of a Technical Expert Panel for the purpose of providing a guidance document to the field.

Guided by implementation science and grounded in policy, financing, systems design, and workforce development, she has shaped the vision, mission, and operational approach of Innovations Institute. Her approach has yielded Innovation's enduring centers and specialized units that are driving systemic change at the state and community levels, including: Parent, Infant, and Early Childhood (PIEC) Team; National Wraparound Implementation Center—supporting multi-tiered care coordination and peer support models; Technical Assistance Network for Children's Behavioral Health (TA Network); Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) Hub; and the emerging Residential Reform, Service Array, and Department of Justice (DOJ) Settlement Agreement work. She is particularly adept at funder communication, establishing both fiscal and project-based quality control mechanisms, and ensuring timely, accurate, and high-quality deliverables—as evidenced by SAMHSA's "exceptional" ratings in every area of the NTTAC Contract Performance Assessment Report.

Steve Appleton (steve@gle.world)

Steve has served as President and Chief Executive of Global Leadership Exchange (GLE) since January 2022, having previously been the European Lead for the organization. GLE connects leaders in mental health, disability and substance use. It creates spaces for sharing ideas, knowledge, and best practice to help spread innovation and change lives. Its global leadership community is committed to advancing the experiences and opportunities for people with mental health, disability, or substance use needs. GLE is an international organization supporting leaders to grow, learn and develop, offering a space where trust lies at the foundation of all that we do. Prior to his role with GLE, Steve was Managing Director of a consultancy and research practice specializing in work relating to mental health, housing, disability and older age. He originally trained as a social worker and held several practice posts and operational management roles in local government and the English National Health Service. He was a senior manager for a regional arm of the National Health Service, leading on mental health strategy and performance. He has worked nationally and internationally on population based mental health improvement programs in cities and urban regions. Steve is the author of a range of UK national guidance and best practice and has played a leading role in population based mental health improvement initiatives in cities across the UK and Europe. He works

closely with organizations including the World Health Organization, Mental Health Europe and with leaders in a number of government departments and agencies around the world. Alongside his role with GLE Steve also serves as Chair of the Board of the Association of Mental Health Providers in England and Wales and is a Global Advisor to the Coalition for Mental Health Investment. Steve is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Kana Enomoto (kana_enomoto@mckinsey.com)

Kana Enomoto, Partner at McKinsey & Company and Director of Brain Health for the McKinsey Health Institute, is an internationally recognized expert in mental health, substance use, brain health, and the brain economy. As a leader of the Behavioral Health Center of Excellence, within McKinsey's healthcare practice, Kana advises the full gamut of public and private sector healthcare stakeholders on reducing the burden of mental, neurological, and substance use disorders in the US and in global markets. As Drirector of Brain Health for MHI, she leads collaborations and research on topics such as the brain economy transition, the intersection of AI and brain health, sustainable financing, improved care pathways, and brain health in the workplace.

Prior to joining McKinsey, Kana was a member of the US Senior Executive Service, where she advised the White House, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the US Surgeon General while leading the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. In these roles, Kana provided executive direction and policy leadership for public mental health and substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery services. Committed to advancing brain health in the US and beyond, she serves on the boards of Mental Health America, NIATx Foundation, and the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention.