

Addressing Maternal Health Inequity during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Speaker Biographies

Oxiris Barbot is senior fellow for public health and social justice at the JPB Foundation. With more than 25 years' experience in public health and health care delivery, Barbot has dedicated her career to achieving health equity. As commissioner of health for New York City, she led the nation's premier health department in centering an equity agenda on communities, bridging public health and health care delivery, and leveraging data for action and policy. She successfully navigated the city's responses to the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and to its largest measles outbreak in 30 years. In 2010, Barbot was appointed commissioner of health for Baltimore, where she led the development of Healthy Baltimore 2015, a health agenda dedicated to ensuring all Baltimore residents can realize their full health potential. Under her leadership, Baltimore achieved a record reduction in the infant death rate, among other health achievements. From 2003 to 2010, Barbot served as medical director of New York City's public schools, spearheading development and implementation of an electronic health record system that improved delivery of health services for more than 1 million children. Before her work in New York City, Barbot served as chief of pediatrics and community medicine at Unity Health Care Inc., a federally qualified health center in Washington, DC. Barbot holds a bachelor's degree from Yale University and a medical degree from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She completed her pediatric residency at the George Washington University's Children's National Hospital.

Ian Hill is a senior fellow in the Health Policy Center at the Urban Institute. He has more than 25 years of experience directing evaluation and technical assistance projects on health insurance programs for disadvantaged children and families. He is a nationally recognized qualitative researcher with extensive experience developing case studies of health program implementation and conducting focus groups with health care consumers, providers, and administrators. Hill directs the Strong Start for Mothers and Newborns Evaluation, which measures the impact of innovative prenatal care strategies on birth outcomes. He also leads various qualitative assessments of the Affordable Care Act's implementation, focusing on outreach and enrollment strategies and provider access. Hill led the qualitative components of two congressionally mandated evaluations of the Children's Health Insurance Program and directed Urban's work on the Insuring America's Children and Covering Kids and Families evaluations. For 10 years, Hill has worked in Los Angeles, initially evaluating First 5 LA's Healthy Kids Program, a universal coverage program targeting Latino immigrant children. He is currently evaluating its Best Start LA initiative to improve the well-being and development of children from birth to age 5. Before joining Urban, Hill was the associate director of Health Systems Research Inc., a senior analyst with the National Governors Association, and a presidential management fellow with the US Department of Health and Human Services. Hill did his undergraduate work at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and received master's degrees in public administration and social work from Syracuse University.

Diana R. Jolles is a public health nurse-midwife finishing her 20th year of practice. She has served in Arizona, Colorado, Texas, and Washington, DC. During her career, Jolles has been active with the birth center model of care. Currently, she serves as the research chair for the American Association of Birth Centers. Jolles is one of 21 nurse-midwives serving in Tucson, Arizona, with El Rio Community Health Center.

Kimberly Lyles is the senior director of population health at Healthcare Access Maryland (HCAM). She has been a registered nurse for 23 years, specializing in community and public health nursing, and has worked with the maternal and child health populations in Baltimore for the last 15 years. Lyles is the director of the Care Coordination program at HCAM, overseeing community outreach and coordination of care for maternal and child Medicaid populations. As senior director of population health, Lyles oversees the work of the Complex

Care and Social Needs programs responsible for connecting people to resources that address social determinants of health. She represents HCAM as a core implementing partner for the B'More for Healthy Babies initiative, in collaboration with the Baltimore City Health Department, and the Family League of Baltimore. She is a certified case manager and recently completed her studies for Lean Six Sigma Green certification from the Georgia Institute of Technology. Lyles holds a degree in health education from the School of Community Health and Policy at Morgan State University and a degree in nursing from the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

Aza Nedhari is the cofounding executive director of Mamatoto Village. She brings more than 18 years of experience in community organizing, reproductive justice, and program development. A licensed certified professional midwife and family counselor, she believes that by promoting a framework of justice, barriers in maternal and child health can dissipate and give rise to healthy individuals, families, and communities. Nedhari is pursuing her doctoral degree in human services with a concentration in organizational leadership and management, with an eye toward improving the sustainability of organizations led by people of color and cultivating innovative models of perinatal care delivery in high-need communities.

Mona Shah, a senior program officer in the Research-Evaluation-Learning unit, joined the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in 2014. Drawing on her deep commitment to research and its potential to impact health and health care, Shah is involved in understanding and measuring key health and health care issues essential to the foundation's strategy to move the US toward a culture of health. Before joining the foundation, Shah served as associate director of federal relations at the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), where she led and executed the organization's strategy related to prevention, access to care, safety net programs, and health equity. As ACS CAN's senior policy analyst, she managed a cancer prevention portfolio and led evaluation of health care reform efforts focused on prevention, early detection, and health equity. Previously, she led epidemiologic research at the United States Military Cancer Institute, the New York City Department of Health, and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Her published research covers cancer disparities, incidence and mortality, tobacco use, obesity, asthma, and use of and access to clinical prevention services. She also founded Subcontinental Drift, a nationwide South Asian American artistic coalition that fosters and provides a supportive and inclusive community for creative expression, community engagement, and positive social change. Shah earned her bachelor's degree in biology and society from Cornell University, master's degree in epidemiology from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, and her doctoral degree in epidemiology from the George Washington University.

Kimá Joy Taylor is a nonresident fellow at the Urban Institute and founder of Anka Consulting, a health care consulting firm. Taylor collaborates with Urban Institute researchers on several topics, including analyses of racial disparities in screening and treatment practices for parents with substance use disorder, management of neonatal abstinence syndrome at hospitals in California, and prevention and early detection of mental and behavioral health problems among adolescents and young adults. She most recently served as the director of the Open Society Foundations' National Drug Addiction Treatment and Harm Reduction Program. She oversaw grantmaking that supported the expansion of access to a nonpunitive continuum of integrated, evidence-informed, and culturally effective substance use disorder services. Before joining the Open Society Foundations, Taylor served as deputy commissioner for the Baltimore City Health Department, a health and social policy legislative assistant for Senator Sarbanes, and a pediatrician at a federally qualified health center in Washington, DC. In 2002, she was awarded a Commonwealth Foundation fellowship in minority health policy at Harvard University. Taylor is a graduate of Brown University, Brown University School of Medicine, and the Georgetown University residency program in pediatrics.