Improving the Collection of Race and Ethnicity Data for Health Plans to Advance Health Equity

Speaker Biographies

Jim Taylor is the inaugural chief equity officer at the Urban Institute. In this role, he provides vision and leadership across all aspects of Urban’s strategies and efforts to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion. Taylor comes to Urban from BoardSource, where for over three years he led BoardSource’s efforts to support nonprofit boards’ leadership on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Taylor has also served as vice president of multicultural leadership at AARP, where he developed partnerships focusing on health, wealth, and “quality of life” programs for Black Americans age 50 and older. At Capital One, as Community Reinvestment Act officer and director of community relations, Taylor led the organization’s philanthropic, volunteer, and programmatic strategies to serve lower-income populations. As director of product innovation at Fannie Mae, he developed first-time homebuyer programs to create homeownership opportunities in underserved communities. Taylor was also a key member of the Fairfax County, Virginia, government strategy team that implemented the county’s racial and social equity policy, One Fairfax. Taylor holds a BA from the University of Virginia and an MBA from UNC-Chapel Hill’s Kenan-Flagler Business School. He also completed the AgL Leadership Program at Georgetown University’s McDonough School of Business. Taylor currently serves on the boards of Carpenter’s Shelter, LearnServe International, and the Giving Square. He is a member of the Leap Ambassadors Community (a private community built around nonprofit leaders, policymakers, and other social-sector stakeholders). Taylor also serves as a judge for the American Express NGen Leadership Award presented by Independent Sector.

Ali Khawar was named Acting Assistant Secretary on March 25, 2021. Mr. Khawar was sworn in on January 20, 2021, as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Employee Benefits Security Administration. He has extensive government experience and has previously served in a variety of roles at the Department, including as an EBSA investigator, in EBSA’s Office of Enforcement, as EBSA’s Chief of Staff in two Administrations, and as a Counselor to the 26th Secretary of Labor, Thomas E. Perez. Mr. Khawar has a bachelor’s degree from Johns Hopkins University and a law degree from Emory University School of Law.

Jennifer Haley is the senior research associate in the Urban Institute’s Health Policy Center. Haley’s current work includes assessing ways states and communities can improve health equity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, barriers to enrollment in publicly subsidized health insurance coverage, coverage gaps for postpartum women, and challenges to accessing the safety net for children in immigrant families. She also conducts research on other issues related to Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, and coverage and care for children and families. Haley holds an MA in sociology from Temple University.

James Klein is the president of the American Benefits Council. He joined the Council in 1988 as Deputy Executive Director and has served as Executive Director/President since 1992. Previously, Jim was manager of pension and health care policy for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and, before that, practiced law for a Washington, D.C. firm specializing in employee benefits. He also worked as a legislative assistant for a member of Congress. Jim serves on the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plan’s Government Liaison Committee and was the recipient of the 2018 Public Service Award from that
organization. He is a fellow of the American College of Employee Benefits Counsel and a member of the editorial advisory board of Benefits Quarterly. In the global benefits arena, Jim serves as a private sector advisor to the Working Party on Private Pensions of the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); and the Council is actively engaged with several international organizations representing the interests of U.S.-based companies operating outside the United States. Jim graduated with a degree in bioethics from Tufts University and a law degree from the George Washington University School of Law.

David Rabinowitz is the Senior Manager in Monitor Deloitte, Deloitte Consulting’s strategy practice, and co-leads Deloitte’s health equity practice. David helps executives and Boards across the health and wellness ecosystem design and advance their ability to generate meaningful and equitable health and wellbeing outcomes. He works closely with organizations across health plans and providers, life sciences companies, government and public sector, non-profits and foundations, and innovators and startups. David is a Fellow at the World Economic Forum helping to lead the Global Health Equity Network. David is deeply involved in shaping Deloitte’s research agenda on the topics of health equity, DEI, mental and behavioral health, and more. David holds an MBA in strategy and organizational behavior from Georgia Tech and a BA in history and politics from the University of Virginia. He is based in Atlanta, GA.

Shantanu Agrawal is the Chief Health Officer at Elevance Health, where he oversees the enterprise’s whole health strategy, including medical policy, clinical quality, and delegation oversight, as well as our industry-leading work to address health-related social needs and health equity. Passionate about improving health outcomes and reducing disparities, Agrawal draws on his clinical and business expertise to push for a more equitable health space for the people Elevance Health serves. Accordingly, he also leads Elevance Health’s community health strategy and the Elevance Health Foundation. Outside of Elevance Health, Agrawal serves on numerous boards and committees that deepen his commitment to advancing health. Follow him on Twitter and LinkedIn.

Nicole Evans is the director of Population and Public Health at the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP). Prior to joining NASHP, she was responsible for advancing vaccination health literacy and health equity in underinsured and underserved communities as a health equity program manager with CDC Foundation. To the director role, she also brings previous experience as a deputy director for state affairs with the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) where she led 13 states as a Medicaid subject matter expert specializing in state programs for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities, Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities, behavioral health and mental health, and maternal health outcomes. Former roles also include management positions with the North Carolina Department of Medical Assistance, Texas Health and Human Service Commission, and the Austin/Travis County Health Department. She has a master’s in public health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), where she also held a program manager role with UNC Ethnicity, Culture, and Health Outcomes (ECHO) Program, and a BA in Political Science from Hampton University.

Shyloe Jones is the Families USA’s Senior Manager for Health Equity. She joined Families USA from Business Group on Health where she staffed their Evidence-based Benefit Design Committee and contributed to projects on COVID-19 equitable vaccine distribution, expanding access to behavioral health services, and telemedicine among other equity issues. Previously Jones served as a Research Assistant at George Washington University’s Milken Institute School of Public Health and Altarum’s Healthcare Value Hub focusing on payment and delivery system reform, and in multiple roles at the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. She began her career as a Marketing Associate at The Advisory Board Company. Jones holds a BA in history from Amherst College and MPH in health policy from George Washington University.
Carole Mendoza is the value-based leader and relationship builder whose career spans 20+ years in strategic program planning and design for multinational Fortune 500 companies, including IBM, Amgen, and Chevron. She recently joined Voya Financial as the Vice President of Benefits, where she crafts the enterprise benefits strategy, expands employee retirement readiness initiatives, and champions DE&I and health equity across the organization. Leveraging her vast benefits experience, Carole has initiated global programs that continue to touch hundreds of thousands of employees worldwide. In addition to corporate work, she partners with employee coalitions and advocacy groups in Washington, DC, to advocate for the importance of employee health and long-term retirement planning. As a respected thought leader in employee insurance and benefits programs, Carole is frequently called upon to participate in industry groups and speak at national conferences, including The Conference Board Employee Health Care Conference and HLTH Conference. Carole is an MPH candidate at The George Washington University—Milken Institute School of Public Health, where she is working to deepen her expertise in the US healthcare system. She also holds an MBA from UCLA’s Anderson School of Management and is certified by the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans as an Employee Benefit Specialist. Carole serves on the Board of the Midwest Business Group on Health and as Board Chair of 2020 Mom, a nonprofit focused on closing gaps in maternal mental health.

Brian Smedley is among the inaugural class of equity scholars at Urban, where he’ll continue his policy research to address institutional and structural racism and their role in health and health care inequities. Formerly, Smedley was executive director and a co-founder of the National Collaborative for Health Equity and was co-director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Leaders National Program Center. He also served in leadership roles at the American Psychological Association, the Institute of Medicine (now the National Academy of Medicine), and the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. Among his awards and distinctions, Smedley has been honored by the Congressional Black Caucus, the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, the American Public Health Association, the American Psychological Association, and the Institute of Medicine. Smedley serves as a consultant to the Saint Louis University Institute for Healing Justice and Equity’s Anti-Racism Consortium.