



The 33rd Annual Symposium on Health Care Services in New York: Research and Practice



Speaker Biographies

Jonathan (Jon) Blum currently serves as the Principal Deputy Administrator and Chief Operating Officer at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). In this dual role, he oversees CMS’s program policy planning and implementation and the day-to-day operations of the entire agency. CMS’s programs provide health coverage to more than 147 million individuals, spending more than \$1 trillion in annual benefits with an annual operating budget of more than \$6 billion. Mr. Blum previously served as the Deputy Administrator and Director from 2009 – 2014, leading the agency’s Medicare payment and delivery reform strategies and the policy and program management of the Medicare program.

Mr. Blum has more than 25 years of public- and private-sector experience working in health care policy and administration. In addition to his positions at CMS, he has worked as a strategy and management consultant, an executive vice president for medical affairs at CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, as professional staff at the Senate Finance Committee, and as a program analyst at the Office of Budget and Management.

Prior to joining CMS, Mr. Blum served on nonprofit boards of several organizations with missions to improve access and equity in health care and health coverage, including Mary’s Center, a federally qualified health center; the Primary Care Coalition of Montgomery County; and the Medicare Rights Center. He earned a Master of Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a BA from the University of Pennsylvania.

Jeffery Brenner, MD, is the chief executive officer of the Jewish Board, which he joined in 2021. A health care and nonprofit leader focused on improving outcomes for vulnerable and complex populations, Dr. Brenner began his career as a frontline family physician, providing full-spectrum family health services for a Medicaid-enrolled population.

From 2017 to 2020, as a senior vice president at United Healthcare, Dr. Brenner co-developed and jointly scaled a national program to provide housing and support services to complex Medicaid members experiencing homelessness in over 22 states. Recognizing the need for a new way for hospitals, providers, and community residents to collaborate, he founded what would become the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers in 2002 and served as its CEO from its incorporation in 2006 through 2017. In 2013 he was honored with the MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship for his innovative use of data to identify high-need, high-cost patients in a fragmented system and improve their care. While continuing to serve as the CEO of the Camden Coalition, in 2012 Dr. Brenner accepted an invitation from a local hospital to jointly reorganize and co-lead its urban outpatient hospital clinics, which launched a highly successful inpatient and outpatient addiction treatment program that brought addiction services to the emergency room, hospital floors, and pregnant mothers experiencing addiction.

Dr. Brenner holds a BA in biology from Vassar College and graduated from the Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Ramon Gist, MD, is an assistant professor of pediatrics and the director for Pediatric Critical Care Medicine at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University. He obtained his bachelor's in biomedical sciences from The Sophie Davis School for Biomedical Education and his doctorate in medicine from SUNY Stony Brook School of Medicine. He completed his residency training in General Pediatrics at Cohen Children’s Medical Center and his fellowship training in Pediatric Critical Care Medicine at New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center. Dr. Gist has since established himself as a content expert in disaster management, academic international medicine, and J.E.D.I (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) initiatives as evidenced by

numerous publications in peer-reviewed journals, national and international teaching opportunities, and leadership in professional medical societies. Always making it a priority to give back to his local community, Dr. Gist has volunteered with and now serves as clinical director for KAVI, which is a hospital, school, and community-based violence intervention and prevention program located in Brooklyn, NY.

Chethan Sathya, MD, MSc, is a pediatric trauma surgeon and National Institutes of Health-funded firearm injury prevention researcher. He is director of Northwell Health's Center for Gun Violence Prevention and oversees the health system's expansive approach to firearm injury prevention. Additionally, Dr. Sathya serves as associate trauma director at Cohen Children's Medical Center and assistant professor of surgery and pediatrics at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell.

Dr. Sathya spearheaded the formation of the National Gun Violence Prevention Learning Collaborative for Hospitals and Health Systems and was recently awarded \$1.4 million from the NIH to study gun violence prevention and implement a first-of-its-kind protocol to universally screen among those at risk of firearm injury. He is a powerful voice and advocate for firearm injury prevention. His role as a pediatric trauma surgeon in Chicago and New York has exposed him to the dramatic results of gun violence, which has fueled his passion to find solutions to the national issue. As a surgeon-journalist with firsthand experience pulling bullets out of children — many of whom die — Dr. Sathya has a unique perspective and deep-rooted passion in telling the stories of children affected by gun violence.

Dr. Sathya completed medical school and general surgery training at the University of Toronto, followed by a Pediatric Surgery Fellowship at Northwestern Medicine in Chicago. He holds a Master's in clinical epidemiology from the University of Toronto, in addition to completing a Fellowship in Global Journalism at the Munk School of Global Affairs and a Global Public Health program at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health.

Calliana Thomas is the inaugural director of the New York State Office of Gun Violence Prevention (OGVP). In her role, Ms. Thomas leads New York's efforts to identify and bring together key partners in the community with government entities to identify steps that can be taken to curb gun violence in New York. Located within the NYS Department of Health's Office of Health Equity and Human Rights, the OGVP collaborates with the Division of Criminal Justice Services and other State agencies to coordinate efforts and direct resources to neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by community gun violence due to structural racism and historical disinvestment.

Ms. Thomas has extensive experience in gun-violence prevention, project management, leadership, and youth development services. A lifelong Harlem resident, Ms. Thomas has deep roots in New York City's vibrant communities; she knows that elevating community voice is the best and only way to make holistic, impactful and positive changes. Before joining OGVP, Ms. Thomas was the assistant director of technical assistance with the William Julius Wilson Institute for Harlem Children's Zone, where she spearheaded efforts to expand cradle-to-career programming nationally. Previously, during seven years working with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Violence Prevention Program, Ms. Thomas coordinated with government agencies to collaborate with community members, leaders, and neighborhood-based organizations to support gun violence prevention across the five boroughs. She began her career at Harlem's Minisink Townhouse, managing their youth development and restorative justice programming. Ms. Thomas attended the Post-Baccalaureate Program in Pre-Medical Science at Columbia University in the City of New York and obtained a BS in Psychology from Georgia State University in 2008.