



California Health Care Foundation Los Angeles Regional Market Study

Friday, January 29, 2021

Speaker Biographies

John Baackes is chief executive officer of L.A. Care Health Plan, the nation's largest publicly operated health plan, serving more than two million members in Los Angeles County. Baackes works with L.A. Care's Board of Governors to set the strategic vision while overseeing the day-to-day operations. He currently serves on the boards of America's Health Insurance Plans, Medicaid Health Plans of America, California Association of Health Plans, Local Health Plans of California, and Project Angel Food, and he serves as chair of the SNP Alliance and Urban Voices Project.

Before joining L.A. Care, Baackes served as president of AmeriHealth Caritas VIP Plans, where he oversaw the Medicare Advantage business unit. He holds a bachelor's degree from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

Christina R. Ghaly, MD, has served as the director of the County of Los Angeles Department of Health Services (DHS) since October 2017. In this capacity, Ghaly has responsibility for overseeing the operations of the county's four public hospitals and 27 outpatient clinics, the Office of Diversion and Re-entry, Housing for Health, Correctional Health Services, and the county's Emergency Medical Services Agency. She leads strategic, operational, and clinical/financial initiatives critical to DHS's role in serving the health needs of vulnerable populations across the county and DHS's continued transformation in an era of health reform.

Ghaly previously served as chief operations officer for DHS from 2016 until her appointment as director. Her previous roles within DHS also include serving as the deputy director for strategy and operations and as the interim chief executive officer at Olive View–UCLA Medical Center and LAC+USC Medical Center. Ghaly attended Harvard Medical School and completed a residency in internal medicine at the University of California, San Francisco. She continues to see patients in urgent care at LAC+USC Medical Center.

Louise McCarthy, MPP, is the president and CEO of the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County (CCALAC), where she represents the interests of Los Angeles–area community clinics and health centers, along with those they serve. Previously, McCarthy served as CCALAC's vice president of governmental affairs. She is a board member and the immediate past board chair of the California Primary Care Association (CPCA).

Before joining CICALAC, McCarthy was the assistant director of policy for CPCA, where she worked on statewide legislative, regulatory, and administrative issues impacting California's community clinics and health centers. She has also worked for the California Bureau of State Audits, conducting performance evaluations of state agencies, and for the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, analyzing policies affecting the business community. McCarthy holds a master's degree in public policy and is a senior fellow at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs.

Thomas M. Priselac, MPH, has served as president and CEO of Cedars-Sinai since 1994 and was also named president and CEO of the Cedars-Sinai Health System when it was formed in 2017. The Cedars-Sinai Health System includes the nationally recognized Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and its affiliated physician network, major programs in physician and health professions education, and the highly regarded Burns and Allen Medical Research Institute; the 470-bed Torrance Memorial Medical Center and its affiliated physician network; and Cedars-Sinai Marina Del Rey Hospital, a 133-bed community hospital. Through the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, the Health System also has joint venture partnerships with the California Rehabilitation Institute, a 138-bed rehabilitation hospital in Los Angeles, and the Providence Cedars-Sinai Tarzana Medical Center, a 249-bed community hospital.

An author and invited speaker on policy issues regarding the delivery and financing of healthcare, Priselac has served the health care field in various roles during his career at Cedars-Sinai. He is a past chair of the American Hospital Association Board of Trustees and past chair of the Association of American Medical Colleges. The holder of the Warschaw Law Endowed Chair in Healthcare Leadership at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Priselac also serves as an adjunct professor at the UCLA School of Public Health. Priselac obtained a bachelor's degree in biology from Washington & Jefferson College in Pennsylvania and a master's degree in public health and health services administration and planning from the University of Pittsburgh.

Kristof Stremikis, MPP, MPH, is director of the California Health Care Foundation's Market Analysis and Insight team, which promotes greater transparency and accountability in California's health care system. He oversees the foundation's work to provide research and analysis to policymakers and other health leaders across the state to give a market-wide view of the complex health care ecosystem and to support informed decisions about California's health care landscape.

Stremikis previously served as associate director for policy at the Pacific Business Group on Health, where he also oversaw the Purchaser Value Network. Earlier, he spent six years at the Commonwealth Fund as senior researcher to the president. He received a bachelor's degree in

economics, political science, and history from the University of Wisconsin, Madison; a master's degree in public policy from the University of California, Berkeley; and a master's degree in health policy and management from Columbia University.

Jill Yegian, PhD, launched Yegian Health Insights in 2018, providing consulting services to clients in health care and philanthropy. Yegian has held leadership positions in a variety of health care organizations; in each, she has focused on applying expertise in health policy, payment, and delivery to problems and opportunities. Most recently, she served as vice president for public policy and strategic initiatives at Brown & Toland Physicians, a large independent practice association in the San Francisco Bay Area. Previously, Yegian was senior vice president for programs and policy at the Integrated Healthcare Association (IHA), where she managed a 10-member team of professional staff responsible for performance measurement and payment innovation in California's commercial market and Medi-Cal. Before joining IHA, she codirected the American Institutes for Research Health Policy and Research Group, a team of more than 70 health services research professionals.

Before joining AIR, Yegian spent 13 years with the California Health Care Foundation, where she worked to improve California's financing and delivery systems for health care. At CHCF, she led efforts to increase coverage among California's uninsured and served as the first director of research and evaluation. Yegian's areas of expertise include performance measurement, payment innovation and value-based models, health insurance and the uninsured, and health care cost and quality. She has published widely in peer-reviewed journals, authored a book, and presents regularly to research, policy, and industry audiences. She received a PhD in health services and policy analysis from UC Berkeley.