



Health Data Exchange in California: Paving a Path to Better, Affordable Care

Thursday, August 14, 2025

Speaker Biographies

Julia Adler-Milstein, PhD, is the founding chief of the UCSF Division of Clinical Informatics and Digital Transformation (DoC-IT) and a professor of medicine. As one of the nation's foremost experts at the intersection of health policy and health informatics, she has authored more than 250 influential, peer-reviewed articles and advises federal agencies, including the US Department of Health and Human Services and the US Congress. Her contributions have been recognized through numerous honors, most notably her election to the National Academy of Medicine in 2019 as one of the youngest recent inductees.

Since joining UCSF, she has transformed the University's contributions to advancing the field of applied clinical informatics. She has secured over \$40 million in extramural support, recruited top-tier faculty, launched multiple research centers, and forged a novel partnership with UCSF Health to pioneer approaches to AI monitoring.

Adler-Milstein earned her BA in human biology from Stanford University and her PhD in health policy from Harvard University. She was named one of the top 10 influential women in health IT and has received numerous honors, including the New Investigator Award from the American Medical Informatics Association and AcademyHealth's Alice S. Hersh New Investigator Award.

Scott Christman, MS, MPDS, was appointed in 2021 to be the chief deputy director at the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), formerly the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD). Previously, he served as the chief data officer for the California Department of Public Health and the chief information officer (CIO) for OSHPD, where he was responsible for healthcare data programs and information technology services. From 2016 to 2017, Christman served as acting CIO for the California Health and Human Services Agency.

Prior to serving in these roles, Christman held senior management positions with the UC Davis Health System and Adventist Health, where he led health information exchange programs statewide and regionally. Christman holds master's degrees from UC Davis and the University of Southern California.

Sandra R. Hernández, MD, is president and CEO of the California Health Care Foundation. Prior to joining CHCF, Hernández was CEO of The San Francisco Foundation. She previously served as director of public health for the City and County of San Francisco.

In February 2023, Hernández was appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom to serve on the state's Health Care Affordability Board. From 2018 to 2023, she served on the Covered California board of directors, after having been appointed by Governor Jerry Brown. In 2019, she was appointed by Governor Newsom to the Healthy California for All Commission. During her time at the San Francisco Foundation, she co-chaired San Francisco's Universal Healthcare Council, which designed Healthy San Francisco. It was the first time a local government in the US attempted to provide health care for all of its constituents.

Hernández practiced at San Francisco General Hospital in the HIV/AIDS Clinic from 1984 to 2016 and was an assistant clinical professor at the UCSF School of Medicine. In 2024, UCSF awarded Hernández its highest honor, the UCSF Medal.

She is a graduate of Yale University, the Tufts School of Medicine, and the certificate program for senior executives in state and local government at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Tarek Mahdi, MD, is president of Riverside Family Physicians and a respected physician and healthcare leader with expertise in primary care, hospice, and palliative medicine. He is deeply committed to population health management, behavioral health integration, and continuous quality improvement – advancing systems of care that are proactive, data-driven, and patient-centered. Mahdi has been instrumental in developing and leading innovative care models that improve outcomes for medically complex and underserved populations.

Since 2005, Mahdi has held a leadership role with the Riverside County Medical Association and serves on the board of directors for the Inland Empire Health Information Exchange, helping guide regional efforts in health data sharing and coordinated care. As medical director of palliative care at both Riverside Community Hospital and Parkview Community Hospital, he has led the design and implementation of interdisciplinary palliative programs emphasizing dignity, comfort, and ethical decision-making at the end of life. Mahdi also chairs the Inland Empire Palliative Care Coalition and the Ethics Committee at Riverside Community Hospital, further solidifying his role as a regional voice for compassionate, value-based care. His leadership was recognized in 2012 with the Robert D. Sparks, MD, Leadership Achievement Award.

Julia Hook McConaghy, MS, is a healthcare executive whose strategic leadership and operational expertise have reshaped how data, people, and performance connect across the

care continuum. McConaghy brings a transformative approach to healthcare operations, population health management, and value-based care. As the senior vice president and chief operations officer of Coordinated Regional Care (CRC) Group, a division of Prospect Medical Holdings, McConaghy oversees a \$656 million hospital revenue portfolio and 134,000 lives under dual risk, driving integration and value-based outcomes through data-informed strategies.

McConaghy brings a unique cross-sector perspective on health information exchange and its transformative role in population health. Under her guidance, CRC has implemented chronic care protocols and social determinants of health (SDOH) screening tools that not only reduce avoidable admissions but also optimize data flow between care teams, impacting both cost and quality within high-risk populations. Her development of a Clinical and Social Services team led to sophisticated Chronic Care and SDOH programs, powered by smart data-sharing infrastructure that brought together the hospitals, medical groups, and community-based organizations to better serve the dual-risk members under their management.

Prior to her current role, McConaghy served as CEO of OakRidge Consultants, where she led high-impact engagements across risk contracting, strategic acquisitions, and brand development. Her earlier positions include executive leadership roles in hospitals, medical groups, health plan operations, and physician network development. McConaghy earned a master of science in health care administration and bachelor of science in health care management, and she completed the women in governance certificate program at the UCLA Anderson Graduate School of Management.