SPEAKERS

TEXAS HEALTH CARE SUMMIT: HEALTH TODAY, HEALTH CARE TOMORROW
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GEORGES BENJAMIN
Georges Benjamin currently serves as the Executive Director of the American Public Health Association, the nation’s oldest and largest organization of public health professionals. He is also a former Secretary of Health for the State of Maryland. Benjamin is a graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology and the University of Illinois College of Medicine. He is board-certified in Internal Medicine, a Master of the American College of Physicians, a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, a Fellow Emeritus of the American College of Emergency Physicians, and a member of the National Academy of Medicine. He serves on several nonprofit boards such as Research! America, the Truth Initiative, and the Reagan-Udall Foundation. He is also a member of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council, a council that advises the President on how best to assure the security of the nation’s critical infrastructure.

TRICIA BROOKS
Tricia Brooks is a Senior Fellow at the Center for Children and Families (CCF) and an Associate Research Professor at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy. She works on policy and implementation issues affecting coverage for children and families in Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the health insurance marketplaces. Brooks is a co-author of an annual 50-state study on Medicaid and CHIP eligibility and enrollment policies conducted by Georgetown CCF and the Kaiser Family Foundation. Prior to joining Georgetown University, she served for 15 years as the CHIP director in New Hampshire and was the founding CEO of NH Healthy Kids Corporation, a legislatively created nonprofit organization. Brooks has served as a technical expert for a number of national initiatives including: Maximizing Enrollment, a state learning collaborative funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; the CMS Express Lane Eligibility Technical Advisory Group; and the Consumer Experience Survey Technical Expert Panel; and as a National Advisory Board member for the Ford Foundation’s Work Support Strategies.

FREDERICK CERISE
Frederick Cerise is the Commissioner of the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC) and President and Chief Executive Officer of the Parkland Health and Hospital System in Dallas. Prior to joining Parkland, Cerise served as Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs at the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, New Orleans School of Medicine. He was also the Vice President for Health Affairs and Medical Education of the Louisiana State University System and the Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. Cerise holds a Bachelor of Science from University of Notre Dame and earned his medical degree at Louisiana State University in New Orleans. He completed a residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Alabama in Birmingham and earned a Master of Public Health from Harvard University School of Public Health. Cerise is a member of the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured and has served on the Louisiana Federal Health Care Reform Steering Committee and the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum, among others.
SUSIE DISTEFANO
Susie Distefano is the Chief Executive Officer of the Children’s Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston and oversees operations for the 308-bed hospital and women’s services. She also serves as leader for children’s services across the Memorial Hermann Health System and Assistant Clinical Professor in the Nursing Graduate Program at The University of Texas School of Nursing and Texas Women’s University. Previously, she served as the Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer at Texas Children’s Hospital. Before joining Texas Children’s Hospital, Distefano was a research officer at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center and oversaw clinical research studies in close collaboration with The University of Texas Office of Research. Distefano graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with a bachelor’s degree in nursing and continued her studies at UTHealth School of Nursing, where she earned a master’s degree. She also completed the Wharton Fellows Program in Management for Nursing Executives at the University of Pennsylvania and the Intermountain Health Advanced Training Program.

JAMIE DUDENSING
Jamie Dudensing is the Chief Executive Officer of the Texas Association of Health Plans (TAHP). She is an advocate for public and private health plans and improving access to quality health care for the uninsured, committed to enhancing consumer choice and affordability of health insurance for all Texans. Dudensing, a graduate of the Texas Tech School of Nursing, began her career in Austin after being recruited to become the Capitol nurse. After earning a Master in Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin, she served two sessions as the Health and Human Services Budget Analyst on the House Appropriations Committee. She then joined Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst’s staff where she first served as Senior Advisor for Budget and Policy. She then served as Deputy Chief of Staff and Policy Director for Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst. With more than a decade of engagement in health care and appropriations policy, Dudensing provides TAHP with an extensive record of coordinating legislative strategies, testifying before legislative committees and working closely with state agency administrators to formulate and implement policy.

MARK HAYWARD
Mark Hayward is a Professor of Sociology, Centennial Commission Professor in the Liberal Arts, a Faculty Research Associate and Training Director of the Population Research Center, and Director of the Population Health Initiative at The University of Texas at Austin. He is the Chair of the Sociology of Population section of the American Sociological Association and former President of the Southern Demographic Association. Hayward received his Ph.D. in Sociology from Indiana University, and his primary research addresses how life course exposures and events influence the morbidity and mortality experiences of the adult population. His recent studies have clarified how early life conditions influence socioeconomic, race and gender disparities in adult morbidity and mortality; the demography of race/ethnic and gender disparities in healthy life expectancy; social inequality in the biomarkers of aging, and the health consequences of marriage, divorce, and widowhood. Most recently, he has been investigating the fundamental inequalities in adult mortality in the U.S. arising from educational experience, differences in these associations by race and gender, and trends in inequality in mortality.
S. CLAIBORNE "CLAY" JOHNSTON
Clay Johnston is the inaugural Dean of the Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin. His ambitious vision includes building a world-class medical school by creating a vital, inclusive health ecosystem that supports new and innovative models of education and healthcare delivery—all with a focus on improving health and making Austin a model healthy city. He is also a neurologist, specializing in stroke care and research. Johnston is a graduate of Amherst College and Harvard Medical School. He later received a Ph.D. in Epidemiology from the University of California, Berkeley, and was a resident in Neurology at UCSF, where he later trained in Vascular Neurology. Prior to the Dell Medical School, Johnston was Associate Vice Chancellor for Research at the University of California, San Francisco. He also directed the Clinical and Translational Science Institute, overseeing the planning, development, and implementation of a $112-million, five-year, National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant award; and founded the UCSF Center for Healthcare Value to engage faculty and trainees in improving the quality of care while also lowering costs. During his 20 years at UCSF, Johnston rose the academic ranks to Professor of Neurology and Epidemiology and directed the Stroke Service.

JACK LEWIN
Jack Lewin is Principal and Founder of Lewin and Associates LLC of New York City, and is the Chairman of the National Coalition on Health (NCHC) of Washington D.C. Lewin and Associates is a consulting organization focused on launching health start-up companies and on developing policy and advocacy positions for health sector companies and government. The NCHC is a highly respected national advocacy organization in Washington D.C. representing 90+ national health sector organizations with collectively over 150 million members. From 2006 through 2012, Lewin was Chief Executive Officer of the 52,000-member American College of Cardiology (ACC), representing over 90% of U.S. cardiologists, 5,000 cardiovascular nurses and clinicians, and over 5,000 international members. During his tenure, ACC developed the National Cardiovascular Data Registries comprised of 30 million patient records from over 3,500 hospitals and 1,000 outpatient practices organized to systematically improve heart and vascular outcomes. Prior to ACC, Lewin was Chief Executive Officer of the 35,000-member California Medical Association, where he also advised two Governors and the state legislature on health policy.

CYNTHIA OSBORNE
Cynthia Osborne is an Associate Professor of Public Affairs and Director of the Center for Health and Social Policy at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin. She is also founder and Director of the largest research group at the LBJ School, the Child and Family Research Partnership (CFRP), specializing in rigorous research to strengthen families and public policies. Her teaching and research interests include social policy issues, poverty and inequality, family and child well-being, and family demography. Osborne is an appointed member of the National Academies of Sciences (NAS) Committee to Reduce Child Poverty by Half in Ten Years and an elected member of the leadership council for the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM). Osborne has extensive experience leading long-term evaluations of national and state programs, with the aim of helping organizations understand what works and why, and how to ensure sustainable implementation of effective policies. Osborne holds a Ph.D. in Demography and Public Affairs from Princeton University, a Master in Public Policy from Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, and a Master of Arts in Education from Claremont Graduate University.
BEN RAimer

Ben Raimer is the President-Elect of the Texas Pediatric Society, the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. He is also a tenured professor at The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) in Galveston in the departments of Pediatrics, Family Medicine, and Preventive Medicine and Community Health. Raimer was appointed Senior Vice President for the Office of Health Policy and Legislative Affairs at UTMB and then as Executive Director of the UTMB Community and Global Health Collaborating Center. He previously served as Vice President for the UTMB Office of Community Outreach, Chief Physician Executive and CEO of UTMB Correctional Managed Care, Medical Director of the UTMB Primary Care Outpatient Clinics, CEO for Community Health Services, and Chief Physician Executive for UT-MED (The Group Practice of Medicine at UTMB). Raimer holds an undergraduate degree in biology from East Texas Baptist University, a master’s degree in human genetics from the UTMB Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, and a doctorate from the UTMB School of Medicine.

JOHN ROTHER

John Rother is President and CEO of the National Coalition on Health Care, America’s oldest and most diverse group working to achieve comprehensive health system change. Prior to joining the Coalition, Rother served as the longtime Executive Vice President for Policy, Strategy, and International Affairs at AARP. Previously, Rother was Staff Director and Chief Counsel for the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging under the direction of Chairman John Heinz (R-PA) and served as Special Counsel for Labor and Health to U.S. Senator Jacob Javits (R-NY). Rother is a graduate of Oberlin College and the University of Pennsylvania Law School. Rother serves on several boards, including the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation, the National Quality Forum, the Alliance for Health Reform, the Pension Rights Center, and Generations United. He also serves on the MacArthur Foundation’s Aging Society Network and the Institute of Medicine’s National Roundtable on Value and Science-Driven Health Care. He has consistently been named as one of the Most Powerful People in Healthcare. In 2010 Rother received the Robert Ball Award for Outstanding Achievements in Social Insurance from the National Academy of Social Insurance for “lifetime advocacy to strengthen Social Security and Medicare.”

CHARLES SMITH

Charles Smith was selected by Texas Governor Greg Abbott to serve as the Texas Health and Human Services Executive Commissioner for the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) in 2016. Smith previously served as the Health and Human Services Chief Deputy Executive Commissioner. During his tenure at HHSC, Smith has worked to improve the agency’s efficiency and accountability to Texas citizens. Smith previously served as Deputy for Child Support at the Office of the Attorney General where he was responsible for the overall delivery of child support services performed by the division’s 2,700 employees. Smith began his career in the Texas Office of the Attorney General’s office as a volunteer in the Child Support Division in 1988 and attained positions of increasing responsibility during his 26 year career within the division. Smith served as the Child Support Division’s Deputy Director for 10 years overseeing field operations and led the division’s transformation to become the top-rated child support program in the nation. His work in this area has earned him multiple awards throughout his career, and under Smith’s leadership the Texas Child Support Division was recognized as the most efficient and effective program in the nation for two years in a row.