



2026 Ohio Health Policy Summit

August 26, 2026

The Ohioan Hotel & Event Center
Columbus, OH

Speaker biographical summaries

HPIO presentation (9:45 am plenary session)

Data and Findings from the Health Value Dashboard

Amy Rohling McGee, MSW, President, HPIO

Amy Rohling McGee has served as the president of the Health Policy Institute of Ohio since 2010. With her leadership, HPIO has developed a reputation as a trusted source of data and evidence-informed policy analysis. McGee has more than 30 years of experience in policy analysis, management, government relations, planning, stakeholder engagement, coalition building and communication.

McGee has both public and private sector experience, including service in the executive and legislative branches of government and leadership of nonprofit organizations. McGee earned her bachelor's degree and master's degree in social work from Ohio State University.

Opening keynote (10:00 am plenary session)

Catalyzing policy progress through data and evidence

Alex Spratt, JD, Vice President of Health Care, Arnold Ventures

Alexandra Spratt leads Arnold Ventures' efforts to reduce hospital and provider prices in the commercial market to lower health care costs for American families, employers, and taxpayers. Since joining AV in 2019, she has focused on advancing meaningful, evidence-backed policy changes to reduce provider prices and improve health care competition at the state and federal level through strategic investments, policy development, and policymaker education and engagement.

Alongside her work at AV, Alex serves as an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University Law Center, where she teaches an upper-level course on how the private health insurance market is shaped by the interaction of health policy and the law.

Prior to joining Arnold Ventures, Alex worked at CapView Strategies, a boutique health policy consulting firm in Washington, D.C., where she primarily focused on Medicare and Medicaid payment and delivery reform, broader health reform, and drug pricing. During law school, Alex worked on Capitol Hill, in the Maryland Senate, and at several policy and advocacy organizations focused on health care and women's issues.

Alex holds a J.D. from American University's Washington College of Law and a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Florida.



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Healthcare access & affordability (11 am breakout session)

State solutions to rising healthcare costs: A roadmap for Ohio

Moderator

Sabrina Corlette, JD, Research Professor, Founder, and Co-Director, Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy Center on Health Insurance Reforms

Sabrina Corlette, J.D. is a research professor, founder, and co-director of the Center on Health Insurance Reforms (CHIR) at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy. At CHIR she directs research on health reform issues, with a focus on state and federal regulation of private health insurance. She provides expertise and strategic advice to individuals and organizations on health insurance laws and programs and provides technical support to government officials and stakeholders through the publication of resource guides, white papers, issue briefs, blog posts and fact sheets. She has testified numerous times before the U.S. Congress and is frequently quoted in the news media on emerging health care issues. She has published dozens of papers relating to the regulation of health insurance and health care markets.

Prior to joining the Georgetown faculty, Ms. Corlette was Director of Health Policy Programs at the National Partnership for Women & Families, where she provided policy expertise and direction for the organization's advocacy on health care reform. From 1997 to 2001, Ms. Corlette worked for the U.S. Senate Health Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, where she served as health legislative assistant to Senator Tom Harkin. After leaving the Hill, Ms. Corlette served as an attorney at the law firm Hogan Lovells, where she advised clients on health care law and policy.

Ms. Corlette is a member of the D.C. Bar and received her J.D. with high honors from the University of Texas at Austin and her undergraduate degree with honors from Harvard University.

Panelists

Brian O'Rourke, PhD, MA, Healthcare Policy Analyst, Health Policy Institute of Ohio

Brian O'Rourke, PhD, MA, is a Healthcare Policy Analyst at the Health Policy Institute of Ohio. Brian's expertise resides in the areas of healthcare spending, insurance, and behavioral healthcare.

Prior to joining HPIO full time, Brian was a research associate at The Ohio State University College of Public Health, focusing on topics that included medical education, health reform, and innovative care delivery approaches. He also worked with HPIO as a contracted data analysis consultant beginning in 2021.



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Brian graduated with a PhD in Health Services Management and Policy from Ohio State University. He also holds a Master of Arts in Bioethics and a Bachelor of Arts in Biology from Case Western Reserve University. In his free time, Brian enjoys running, birding, and preserving food from the garden.

Rep. Meredith Craig (R-Smithville), Ohio House of Representatives, District 77

Meredith Craig is serving in her first term as State Representative for Ohio House District 77, representing all of Wayne County. Born and raised in Wayne County, Meredith is a proud Wayne Township resident. She graduated from Smithville High School and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Political Science from Malone University.

Meredith's career in public service began after being accepted into the Legislative Service Commission fellowship, where she gained valuable experience working in the Ohio Senate. She later served as senior legislative aide to Representative Ron Amstutz, who previously represented the district she now serves, and held the role of Speaker Pro Tempore.

In 2015, Meredith graduated from the prestigious Jo Ann Davidson Leadership Institute, further enhancing her leadership skills and expanding her influence in the political sphere.

Her professional experience also spans across both the Kasich and DeWine administrations, where she worked in the Ohio Department of Insurance. Most recently, Meredith advocated for Ohio's businesses as part of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

A committed community leader, Meredith is a Wooster Rotarian and actively involved in her local church, Hillside Baptist Church in Rittman. She is married to Ricky Craig, a deputy sheriff for Wayne County, and together they continue to support their community.

Rep. Rachel Baker, PhD, MSW, (D-Cincinnati), Ohio House of Representatives, District 27

State Representative Rachel Baker is currently serving her second term in the Ohio House of Representatives representing House District 27, which includes the eastern side of Hamilton County and suburbs of Cincinnati.

Rep. Baker ran for office to use her problem-solving skills to make decisions that are backed by evidence when addressing the issues facing Ohioans. She is particularly interested in improving social determinants of health, increasing access to quality healthcare, increasing support for mental health care, promoting preventive care and population health, advocating for adequate funding of Ohio's public schools, and increasing good-paying jobs for working families to promote Ohioans' ability to live happy and healthy lives.

Rep. Baker holds a bachelor's in nursing from the University of Cincinnati, a master's in social work from the University of Michigan, and a Ph.D. in nursing from the University of Cincinnati. In



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her professional career, she is a nurse researcher providing leadership and strategic planning related to a healthcare system's nursing evidence-based practice and research activities. Additionally, she serves as an adjunct instructor for graduate nursing students at several universities. She has authored over 30 peer-reviewed journal articles and has presented locally, nationally, and internationally. She volunteers as a court-appointed special advocate providing support for children experiencing abuse and neglect.

Rep. Baker lives in Anderson Township with her three children and dog. Her family is active in their community by volunteering, playing in school orchestras, soccer teams, cross-country teams, track teams, and swim teams.

Molly Mottram, Director of Healthcare Policy, Ohio Chamber of Commerce

Molly Mottram is the Director of Healthcare Policy at the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, where she leads healthcare policy strategy across the entire healthcare ecosystem. She works with over 118 member organizations, including health plans, hospitals, pharmaceutical manufacturers, and patient advocacy groups, to identify policy opportunities addressing healthcare affordability and access.

Previously, Molly served as Associate Director at the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation, managing a \$9 million statewide non-profit overseeing advocacy and programming for suicide prevention across Ohio. She also held several policy roles at the Ohio Department of Insurance in both the Kasich and DeWine administrations. Notably, Molly specialized in behavioral health policy and led the development and launch of the Mental Health Insurance Assistance Office (MHIA) — a first-of-its-kind resource coordinating across state agencies, the Governor's Office, and health plans to help Ohioans, providers, and families understand their rights when navigating behavioral health coverage. She began her career in grassroots organizing, campaigns, and coalition-building, leading large-scale advocacy efforts across Ohio, Arkansas, Louisiana and Florida.

She is a graduate of The Ohio State University's John Glenn College of Public Affairs and lives in Columbus with her husband, two daughters, and their golden retriever.



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Behavioral health (11 am breakout session)

Taking mental health supports upstream: The role of social connection and economic stability

Moderator

Jennifer Lloyd, MSPsy, Assistant Director, RecoveryOhio, Office of Governor Mike DeWine

Jennifer Lloyd is the Assistant Director for RecoveryOhio, an initiative within Governor Mike DeWine's office focused on coordinating and expanding efforts to address substance use and mental health disorders. Her work includes enhancing prevention, expanding treatment, supporting recovery services, and partnering with law enforcement to combat illicit drug activity.

Previously, Jennifer served as Central Ohio Territory Business Manager for Alkermes, Inc., where she collaborated closely with behavioral health providers. From 2011 to 2018, she was the Director of Statewide Substance Use and Outreach Initiatives at the Ohio Attorney General's Office, leading efforts in naloxone distribution, public awareness, community engagement, and law enforcement coordination.

Before entering public service, Jennifer worked in sales and management in New York City and Philadelphia. Originally from New Jersey, she moved to Ohio in 1997 and now lives at Buckeye Lake with her partner, Tony White. She cherishes time with her sons, Collin and Caleb, and daughter-in-law, Maggie.

She holds a B.A. in Psychology from Stockton University and an M.S. in Psychology from the University of Phoenix.

Panelists

Rose Frech, Chief External Affairs Officer, Integrated Services for Behavioral Health

Rose Frech is a licensed social worker with broad expertise in navigating the complexities of the health and social services in Ohio. She has served in key positions in fundraising, policy analysis, advocacy and operational leadership in multiple areas of the sector, including community mental health, food and public benefits access, anti-poverty efforts, and early intervention.

A longtime social work educator, Rose has had the privilege of teaching new social workers for over 10 years. Born and raised in Athens, she is a passionate advocate for the Appalachian Ohio region. Rose currently serves as Chief External Affairs Officer at Integrated Services for Behavioral Health, a behavioral health and housing organization serving 24 counties across Southeast and Central Ohio.



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Christine Happel, MSW, LSW, Assistant Director, Age-Friendly Innovation Center

Christine, part of the Age-Friendly Innovation Center team, focuses on collaborative work with older adults, students, and community partners that furthers the mission of AFIC to ensure inclusion and build resiliency to make communities more age-friendly.

Christine was the founding Director of Village in the Ville and helped grow the Village Movement in Central Ohio. Through numerous transportation, emergency response, intergenerational, and community-driven initiatives they co-created, alongside older adults, opportunities for deeper community connection and reciprocity.

In addition to their work roles, Christine is an avid gardener, cyclist, collector of hobbies, and cat lover.

Briston Mitchell, Director of Workforce Development, Urban League of Southwest Ohio

Briston Mitchell is a dynamic operations and workforce development professional with more than 15 years of experience spanning nonprofit, corporate, and government sectors. A proud multiracial woman, Briston brings a unique cultural lens shaped by her life experiences and leads with empathy, creativity, and a deep passion for helping others succeed.

Her professional journey includes roles in Corporate Diversity and Inclusion at The Kroger Co. and as a case manager and courtroom deputy for the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. She also served as Director of Transformative Initiatives and Relationships for the African American Chamber of Commerce.

She is known for her ability to connect with people across backgrounds. Her superpower is being relatable without judgment, breaking down barriers, and creating pathways for personal and professional transformation.

Briston holds an Associate Degree in Business Administration from the University of Cincinnati. She is a proud wife and mother of two and remains deeply committed to empowering others through relationship-building, training, and inclusion.



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Child health and well-being (1:15 pm breakout session)

Child health and well-being in Ohio: Progress made and priorities ahead

Moderator

Rep. Andrea White, Chair of the House Children and Human Services Committee, Ohio House of Representatives

State Representative Andrea White is serving her third term in the Ohio House of Representatives. She represents the 36th House District, which includes Kettering, Oakwood, Riverside and portions of Dayton in Montgomery County, including downtown Dayton and surrounding neighborhoods.

Representative White serves as Chair of the Ohio House Children and Youth Committee, along with serving on the Finance, Health and Energy Committees. She also serves on the Governor's Executive Workforce Board and as chair of the Ohio Children's Trust Fund Board.

White's work in the legislature reflects her passion for prevention and helping children, families, employers and communities be equipped for success. Her legislative initiatives include bills to support our current and future workforce, focusing on education, early learning, infant and maternal health and development, mental health and substance use disorders, and criminal justice.

Prior to joining the Ohio House in 2021, White served as the elected Clerk of Court for Kettering Municipal Court. Along with her public service, White brings extensive experience in the private sector where she owned a small business providing communications and process improvement consulting solutions for corporations, small businesses, arts, healthcare and other non-profit organizations for over 15 years. She also served as a project coordinator for a statewide organization to increase inclusion and eliminate barriers for Ohioans with developmental disabilities, worked in early intervention and as a hospital communications and human resources professional.

White has been a leader in helping to launch community initiatives to address teen alcohol and drug prevention, addiction, hunger and criminal justice issues. A co-founder of the South Suburban Coalition, White also served as long-time chair and board member for Kettering's Partners for Healthy Youth. She has also been active in the region's effort to combat the opioid epidemic and substance use, serving on the Montgomery County Community Overdose Action Team, the Montgomery County Drug-Free Coalition and the Montgomery County Prevention Coalition.



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A long-time resident in the 36th District, Representative White graduated from Centerville High School and received her bachelor's degree from Wright State University. Representative White and her husband John reside in Kettering, where they raised their family.

Panelists

Kara Wentz, Director, Ohio Department of Children and Youth

In August 2023, Governor Mike DeWine nominated Kara B. Wentz to be the Director of the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY).

Kara has spent her career advocating for children. Before being nominated to lead DCY, she served as the Director of the Governor's Children's Initiative and was the Chief Operating Officer for Future Ready Columbus. With more than 20 years in dedicated state service, Kara has extensive experience in serving the most vulnerable children and families in Ohio. She used data as an accountability tool for systemic change during her time as the Assistant Director of Health and Human Services at the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and led several large-scale system and policy changes as Deputy Director at the Office of Family Assistance.

Kara's hometown is Celina, Ohio, but she currently lives in Dublin. She holds a master's in education and Allied Professions from the University of Dayton and a bachelor's in psychology from Ohio State University.

John Stanford, JD, PhD, State Director, Children's Defense Fund Ohio

Dr. John D. Stanford is a dedicated servant leader with almost 30 years of public education, higher education, nonprofit, advocacy, and public policy service in support of children and their families. He is inspired every day to serve others as a fundamental and personal responsibility.

Dr. Stanford and his team serve the children and families of Ohio through research, base building, movement building, and advocacy. We partner with youth, young adults, parents, caregivers, and faith activists to listen to their lived experiences and equip them to turn those experiences into active engagement with policy makers and opinion makers. We also partner with Ohio's Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools Network to serve over 900 scholars each summer with our evidence-based integrated reading curriculum and personal development program. Scholars learn to build their self-esteem, serve others, and actively participate in our democracy.

Dr. Stanford earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Central Michigan University and his Juris Doctor and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Ohio State University.

Dr. Stanford and his wife Robin are the proud parents of an adult daughter, Nia.



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Nick Lashutka, President & CEO, Ohio Children's Hospital Association and CEO, Children's Hospitals' Solutions for Patient Safety

Nick Lashutka joined the Ohio Children's Hospital Association (OCHA) as President in 2007 and has more than 30 years of public policy experience working in the private sector and state government.

OCHA serves as the statewide advocacy leader for children focused on achieving the vision of making Ohio the best place for child health. The organization advocates in partnership with children's hospitals and their patients, families and communities for continuous child health improvement with a focus on bringing solutions to complex public policy challenges.

Under Nick's leadership, OCHA has dramatically expanded its portfolio of work beyond advocacy to include specific efforts designed to save, protect, and enhance the lives of children in Ohio and beyond.

In 2009, Nick was instrumental in the creation of Children's Hospitals' Solutions for Patient Safety (SPS) and currently serves as President of the network. SPS was formed in partnership with Ohio's business community and the six members of OCHA in addition to the Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital and Mercy Children's (Toledo) to eliminate serious harm in our hospitals. Since its founding in Ohio, SPS has now grown to 87 hospitals across North America.

In 2013, the OCHA Research Collaborative Task Force was formed under Nick's leadership and is the first statewide children's focused research collaborative of its kind. Currently four projects are underway that are dramatically improving outcomes for children.

Prior to his work with OCHA, Nick served as the first ever director of external relations for the Ohio Business Roundtable (BRT), a partnership of the chief executives of the state's major businesses. Before joining the BRT, Nick represented organized medicine on behalf of the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) and their physician members.

Nick is a 1990 graduate of the College of William and Mary in Virginia, where he studied both government and history. Nick and his wife, Megan, are the parents of four sons – Kuyper, Duke, Ike and Drake – and live in Upper Arlington.

Randy Leite, PhD, Executive Director Emeritus, Appalachian Children's Coalition

Randy Leite, Ph.D. serves as executive director of the Appalachian Children's Coalition. Leite developed a commitment to the Appalachian region during his 12-year tenure as dean of the College of Health Sciences and Professions at Ohio University. His work as executive director extends his commitment to bringing benefit to children in need and in supporting those who work to meet the needs of children facing a range of behavioral health challenges.



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Leite has had a long interest in child and family well-being. He holds a doctoral degree in Human Development and Family Science from The Ohio State University and has conducted research and taught on father involvement with children, family dynamics, and child and family policy. His interest in this area is also reflected in his having been appointed by Ohio's three most recent governors to serve as a commissioner on the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood where he works to promote meaningful father involvement with children.

He has been involved in numerous community organizations and initiatives including contributing to the development of Live Healthy Appalachia, promoting the establishment of AthensHOPE and the Age-Friendly Athens initiatives, and serving on the boards of numerous organizations including Children's Defense Fund-Ohio, Integrated Services for Behavioral Health, OhioHealth O'Bleness Hospital, Rural Action, Live Healthy Appalachia, and the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association.

Leite and his wife Theresa, a certified nurse midwife, split their time between Hilliard and Athens. They have three children and two grandchildren.

Data and evidence (1:15 pm breakout sessions)

Back to the evidence: Strengthening public trust through transparency and data

Moderator

Kathryn Cooper, PhD, Assistant Professor, Kent State University

Dr. Kathryn "Katie" Cooper is an assistant professor in the School of Media and Journalism at Kent State University. Her research focuses on how scientists and journalists can more effectively communicate with the public about science and environmental issues, especially when such issues are politically contentious. This research investigates the use of documentaries, narratives, and other strategies to overcome biased judgment and decision making, promote healthy behavior, alter public opinion, and increase citizen engagement.

Panelists

Kara Ayers, PhD, Associate Director, University of Cincinnati Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

Kara Ayers is the Associate Director of the UCCEDD and a LEND Core Faculty member. She is a psychologist and an Assistant Professor whose research interests include parenting with a disability, disability culture in media, and health inequities experienced by people with disabilities. In addition to conducting research and teaching, Kara also analyzes policies to



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decide how they would impact people with disabilities and then works with policymakers to improve those policies. Outside of work, Kara enjoys reading and watching her kids participate in sports.

Lynanne Gutierrez, Esq., President & CEO, Groundwork Ohio

Lynanne Gutierrez is the President & CEO of Groundwork Ohio, where she leads the organization's statewide mission to advance early learning and healthy development strategies from the prenatal period to age five.

Under her leadership, Groundwork Ohio has strengthened its reputation as a trusted, nonpartisan voice for Ohio's youngest children, translating data and lived experience into sound public policy that improves the health, education, and economic stability of families across the state.

Tazeen Ahmed, MPH, MCHES, Senior Program Coordinator, Montgomery County ADAMHS Board

Tazeen Ahmed, MPH, MCHES, is a dedicated public health professional committed to strengthening community health systems and improving access to quality care. With experience in county government and a strong foundation in program management, policy implementation, and cross-sector collaboration, she brings a strategic and community-centered approach to her work.

Throughout her career, Tazeen has supported multiple federal, state, and local grants and initiatives, working closely with healthcare systems, community organizations, and state partners to improve outcomes for diverse populations. Her work reflects a deep understanding of how data, policy, and on the ground, partnerships come together to create sustainable change. Tazeen's interests include healthcare administration, community engagement, and system's improvement. She is driven by a belief that effective public health requires not only strong programs, but also clear communication, inclusive decision-making, and culturally informed approaches.

Closing keynote (2:45 pm plenary session)

Working together to improve the health of all Ohioans

Ray Bignall II, MD, FAAP, FASN, Chief Equity Officer, Nationwide Children's Hospital

O. N. Ray Bignall II, MD, FAAP, FASN is the Chief Health Equity Officer at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. He also serves as Director of Kidney Health Advocacy and Community Engagement for the Division of Nephrology and Hypertension, and an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. A graduate of Howard University and Meharry Medical College, Dr. Bignall completed his general pediatrics residency,



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clinical fellowship in nephrology, and NIH post-doctoral research fellowship at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.

As a physician-advocate, Dr. Bignall's work addresses the social determinants of child health, kidney health, and transplantation through community-based scholarship, engagement, and advocacy. He has served as a member of The White House Health Equity Roundtable Series on Access to Care; serves as the Inaugural Chair of the American Society of Nephrology's Health Care Justice Committee; and is a member of the Council on Medical Legislation for the National Medical Association. Dr. Bignall is a recipient of the American Academy of Pediatrics Community Access to Child Health (CATCH) Award; a John E Lewy Fund Advocacy Scholar of the American Society of Pediatric Nephrology; and was named a 40 Under 40 Leader in Minority Health by the National Minority Quality Forum and the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust.