

## BIOS

### Michael Fraser, PhD, CAE, FCPP

#### Executive Director

Association of State and Territorial Health Officials



Michael Fraser has served as ASTHO's executive director since August 2016. Most recently, he served as the executive vice president and CEO of the Pennsylvania Medical Society in Harrisburg, Pa. During his tenure there, he worked with physician leaders to transform the organization into a dynamic, relevant, and effective membership organization representing all the state's physicians, and tackling critical issues such as the opioid misuse and drug abuse crisis. Fraser served as CEO of the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP) from 2007 to 2013, where his leadership was recognized nationally by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau's Director's Award in 2014. In addition, the American Public Health Association's MCH Section awarded AMCHP the Outstanding Leadership and Advocacy Award. Prior to joining AMCHP, Fraser was the deputy executive director of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) from 2002 to 2007, and served in several capacities at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including positions at the Health Resources and Services Administration and CDC. Fraser received a doctorate in sociology from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in May 1997, a Master of Arts degree in sociology in 1994, and a Master of Science degree in Management, Strategy, and Leadership from the Eli Broad School of Business at Michigan State University in 2017. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology from Oberlin College in 1991. He is a Certified Association Executive and a Fellow of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

### Mary Ann Cooney, RN, MS, MPH

#### Chief, Center for Population Health Strategies (CPHS)

Mary Ann Cooney, RN, MS, MPH is Chief of the ASTHO Center for Population Health Strategies. She oversees and provides strategic direction for the Center's three pillars: Clinical to Community Connections, Health Equity and the Social Determinants of Health, and Public Health Data Analytics. Mary Ann previously worked for 14 years at the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. From 2003 to 2008, Mary Ann was the director for the agency's Division of Public Health Services. Mary Ann has also served as adjunct faculty for the Master of Public Health Program at the University of New Hampshire, and received UNH's 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award. She received her baccalaureate in nursing from Saint Anselm College, a Master of Science in nursing administration from University of New Hampshire, and Master of Public Health from the University of New Hampshire. A past president of the New Hampshire Public Health Association, she is a member of several professional organizations, a past member of the New Hampshire YWCA Board of Directors, and a certified yoga instructor. Mary Ann also completed the Harvard John F. Kennedy School of Government Leadership in Public Health program in 2007.

# Melissa L. Lewis, MPH

**Director, Health Equity & Social Determinants of Health, CPHS**

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Melissa L. Lewis, is the Director of Health Equity and the Social Determinants of Health of the ASTHO Center for Population Health Strategies. She has worked at ASTHO for twelve years with key stakeholder groups on public health issues impacting state public health leadership. Ms. Lewis is an experienced program manager professionally trained in behavioral sciences and health education with demonstrated success in administrating multiple projects, quickly learning new program areas and developing creative ideas and approaches. Her public health professional experience ranges from federal grants administration to non-profit public health management. As a Penn State University Minority International Research Training Fellow, Ms. Lewis researched youth-led global tobacco cessation campaigns at the World Health Organization.

Ms. Lewis has a Master's degree in Public Health from Emory University with a specialization in Behavioral Sciences Health Education. Ms. Lewis received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology with a certification in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and was a McNair Scholar at the University of Maryland at Baltimore County (UMBC).



## BIOS

**Patrick Simpson, MPH****Director**

Food, Health &amp; Well-Being

**W.K.  
KELLOGG  
FOUNDATION\****A Partner With Communities Where Children Come First*

Patrick Simpson is director of Food, Health & Well-Being at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, Michigan. As the director of the Food, Health & Well-Being team, Simpson leads a team of seasoned professionals who nurture opportunities for affecting positive systemic change in communities and executing programming efforts aligned with the foundation's mission. He focuses on funding opportunities that enable the foundation to make progress in ensuring that all children can grow and thrive by having love, good parenting, high-quality food, physical activity, interaction with nature and access to health care.

He joined the foundation in 2010 as a program officer on the Food, Health & Well-Being team, focusing on improving birth outcomes, becoming director in 2015. Prior to joining the foundation, Simpson spent nearly 15 years with CityMatCH in Omaha, Nebraska, an organization focusing on maternal and child health needs in U.S. urban areas. He held positions including: executive director (2007-2010); director of operations (2002-2007); program & policy manager (1998-2002); and project coordinator, policy & research (1996-1998). Since 2007, he has also been an instructor of child health policy at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Department of Pediatrics. Simpson holds a bachelor's degree in biology from University of Nebraska-Omaha and a master's in public health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

**Caroline T. Brunton, MS, JD****Program Officer**

Food, Health &amp; Well-Being

Caroline T. Brunton is a program officer for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, Michigan. As part of the Food, Health & Well-Being team, she provides leadership and oversight for on-the-ground execution of programming efforts by evaluating grant proposals, conducting background research, preparation of funding documents, grant portfolio monitoring, promoting community connections and providing grantee technical assistance. Caroline holds a bachelor's degree in microbiology from the University of Rhode Island, as well as a master's degree in epidemiology from the University of Michigan and a Juris Doctorate from Georgia State University.

BIOS

## Rhode Island Department of Health

## Key Staff

Health Equity Zone Project Leadership



**Nicole Alexander-Scott** is the President-Elect of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and has been the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health since 2015. She brings to this position tremendous experience from her work as a specialist in infectious diseases for children and adults at hospitals in RI affiliated with Brown University and at the Rhode Island Department of Health. Dr. Alexander-Scott is board certified in Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Pediatric Infectious Diseases, and Adult Infectious Diseases. She graduated from SUNY Upstate Medical University at Syracuse and obtained a Master's degree in Public Health from Brown University. She is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, and is an Associate Professor of Health Services, Policy, and Practice at the Brown University School of Public Health. In her time as Director, Dr. Alexander-Scott has made the achievement of optimal health for every community throughout RI the principal focus of the Department.

**Ana P. Novais** holds a master's degree in Clinical Psychology, UCLN, Belgium, and is a graduate of the Northeastern Public Health Leadership Institute, University of Albany, and Leadership RI. Ana has worked in Public Health for 30 years, including 5 years in Africa (Cape Verde), 5 years in Portugal, and 20 years in the USA. Ana has worked for the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) since 1998. Since becoming the Executive Director of Health for the Division of Community, Family Health and Equity in 2006, Ana has lead RIDOH's efforts to achieve health equity, including developing and implementing the "Rhode Island Health Equity Framework," a plan of action for achieving health equity at the state and at local level through the "Health Equity Zone" initiative. Ana currently serves as RIDOH's Executive Director of Health and is charged with implementing Strategic Priorities across all divisions.

**Carol Hall-Walker** holds a master's degree in Public Administration, University of RI, and is a graduate of the National Association of Public Health Leadership and Leadership RI. Carol has worked in Public Health for 30 years. Carol has worked for the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) since 1993. She became the Associate Director of Health for the Division of Community Health and Equity in 2016. Carol works with senior-level department and division staff to eliminate health disparities and achieve health equity by addressing the socioeconomic and environmental determinants of health; plan and implement public health activities using evidence-based and promising practices across the life-course; and engage communities as key partners in public health.

**Deborah Garneau** is the Director of the Health Equity Institute and Title V Maternal and Child Health / Special Needs Director at the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH). In this position she is responsible for advancing RIDOH's health equity priorities, identifying and addressing health disparities, and shepherding a sustained platform for the advancement of equity in RI through strategic investments, technical assistance,

engagement, messaging, and public policy. Ms. Garneau leads the Health Equity Institute in administering community contracts related to refugee health, minority health, Health Equity Zones, maternal and child health, and disabilities and health. She provides leadership to address the social, environmental and economic determinants of health affecting vulnerable populations and ensure health disparities are identified and systematically addressed throughout RIDOH programs. Ms. Garneau served as a mental health clinician and administrator with at-risk children and their families prior to state service.

**Christopher Ausura** brings a diverse background to the public sector having worked in finance, hospitality, and construction prior to entering public service. He has been with the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) for the past seven years in a variety of roles, but currently supports the Department as the Health Equity Zone (HEZ) Project Manager. In this role, Chris works to operationalize the Department's socioeconomic and environmental determinants of health policy vision by leading the HEZ Implementation Team in the development of innovative and creative tools and infrastructure to support the HEZ initiative. In addition to his role in HEZ, Chris also represents RIDOH as the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (PBG) Coordinator, and provides strategic support in numerous other equity and determinant-based special projects.

**Mia Patriarca** is a Healthy Communities Specialist with the Physical Activity and Nutrition Program, Division of Community Health and Equity, Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH). In over twenty years with RIDOH, Ms. Patriarca has served in a variety of roles that have focused on building community capacity to address socioeconomic and environmental determinants of health. Ms. Patriarca is currently a Project Officer for two Health Equity Zones (HEZ) and manages technical assistance and training for the HEZ initiative through the Learning Community. She also serves as lead staff to the Commission for Health Advocacy and Equity, a statewide policy-making body focused on eliminating health disparities. Her other roles include functioning as a subject matter expert and liaison to Department programs, and other state agencies, around the built environment and health equity. In addition, Ms. Patriarca teaches on the university level. Ms. Patriarca has a master's degree in Public Policy from Tufts University and over 10 years of experience in community organizing.

**Erin Bertoldi** holds a Masters in Community Health Education degree from Rhode Island College. She has over 10 years' experience working within the public health field in the following sectors: non-profit, health insurance, corporate wellness, and government. She joined the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) in 2015 as a Community Coordinator in the Physical Activity and Nutrition program. Erin also works as a Project Officer for two Health Equity Zones: the City of Providence and Newport. As a lifelong resident of Rhode Island, Erin is thrilled to have the opportunity to work closely at the community level to improve health equity and well-being for all in the state.

**Sophie O'Connell** is the Deputy Communications Director for the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH). In this role, she assists with the management of RIDOH's Center for Public Health Communication and serves as the Communications Lead for RIDOH's Health Equity Institute, overseeing strategic communications for the Health Equity Zone initiative and related efforts to advance equity in Rhode Island. Sophie has more than eight years of experience managing communications for Rhode Island state

agencies and nonprofit organizations, most recently serving as Director of Executive Communications for the Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services. Sophie holds a master's degree in Health Communication from Emerson College.

**Elise George** joined the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) in 2015, working full time as a Program Evaluator for the Integrated Chronic Disease program. In this role, she leads the development and implementation of evaluation plans for two federal grants focusing on the health systems and community-clinical linkages domains. She has also served as one of two evaluators assigned to provide technical assistance to the Health Equity Zones (HEZ) in completing their annual evaluation plans and reports. She has more than eight years' experience including work in community-based research, primary care research, and clinical quality improvement and performance measurement. Elise holds a Master's in Public Health degree with a specialization in epidemiology from Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

**Erica Norcini** is the Operations Liaison for the Health Equity Institute and Academic Center within the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH). In this role, she provides financial and administrative support and serves as the Health Equity Zone (HEZ) Fiscal Manager. She has over 11 years of financial management experience with nine years dedicated to public service at RIDOH. Erica holds a master's degree in Business Administration from Salve Regina University.

**James Rajotte** is the Chief Health Program Evaluator within the Center for Health Data and Analysis at the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH). His primary role is to serve as RIDOH's liaison to the Rhode Island State Innovation Model (SIM), an interagency team working to transform Rhode Island's healthcare system and improve population health. In addition, James actively participates in planning for healthcare workforce transformation as well as implementing Community Health Team and Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) programs. At RIDOH, James also serves as the Public Health Accreditation and Performance Management System Coordinator, and is a member of the RIDOH Academic Center Steering Committee and Health Equity Zone (HEZ) Policy Leadership Team. James holds a Master's of Science degree in Leadership at Roger Williams University.



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## Maryland Department of Health

## Key Staff

Health Enterprise Zone Initiative Leadership



**Howard Haft** has 27 years of clinical experience in primary internal medicine and 10 years of hospital-based emergency medicine, clinical, and leadership experience. He also worked early in his career as a consultant in internal medicine for the State of California's Department of Mental Health. Among his numerous accomplishments: He co-founded ConMed Health Inc. in 1984 and served as its chief medical officer. ConMed is a Maryland-based provider of correctional health care services to county and municipal detention facilities in 15 states. He retired from ConMed in 2010. Dr. Haft also was founder, president, and medical director of Maryland HealthCare Associates, where he established a multi-specialty medical practice. He was founder and president of the Maryland Foundation for Quality Healthcare, which provided health care education to uninsured and under-insured Marylanders.

**Maura Dwyer** is a Senior Administrator in the Maternal and Child Health Bureau at the Maryland Department of Health and previously served as the Program Director for the Maryland Health Enterprise Zones (HEZ) Initiative. Dr. Dwyer earned a Doctorate of Public Health in Environmental Health Sciences at the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, a Master of Public Health at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health, and a Bachelor of Science at Villanova University. Dr. Dwyer has worked in various capacities, including education, research, evaluation, program design and implementation, and policy development. Her work has focused primarily on eliminating disparities in environmental exposures, chronic disease, HIV/AIDS and birth outcomes.

**Donna Gugel** is the Director of the Prevention and Health Promotion Administration at the Maryland Department of Health managing over a \$390 million budget, over 475 staff, and over 30 unique public health programs. The Administration comprises the Bureaus of Maternal and Child Health, Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Outbreak Response, Infectious Disease Prevention and Health Services, Environmental Health, and Cancer and Chronic Disease which represent the pillars of public health services in Maryland. Ms. Gugel earned her Master in Health Science from the Johns Hopkins University, School of Hygiene and Public Health in 1992 and has worked in public health and health services in various roles with the Maryland Department of Health for over twenty-five years.

**David A. Mann** is an Epidemiologist at the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (MHHD) in the Maryland department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and works as an Instructor in the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at the University of Medicine School of Medicine. Dr. Mann received his BA in Biology from The Johns Hopkins University in 1978, his MD from Harvard Medical School in 1982, and his PhD in Epidemiology from University of Maryland, Baltimore in 2007. At DHMH Dr. Mann was a co-



author of the Maryland Plan to Eliminate Minority Health Disparities, released in 2006 by MHHD; and principal author of the Maryland Chartbook of Minority Health and Minority Health Disparities Data, released in 2007, 2009 (2nd ed.) and 2012 (3rd ed.) by MHHD.

**Michelle Spencer** is the Associate Director of the Bloomberg American Health Initiative and Associate Scientist within the Department of Health Policy and Management at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She has over 20 years of experience in public health management and leadership and a wealth of experience in administrative and operational management, strategic planning, resource management, and policy development. Spencer's focuses on addressing the preventable nature of public health issues through integrated, evidence-based approaches with emphasis on reducing disparities and advancing health equity. Spencer served as the Chief of Staff of the Baltimore City Health Department from 2004 – 2012.

**Sharon Cameron**, is the manager and HEZ Administrator for AAMC Community Clinics, LLC. Ms. Cameron is a medical management professional with over 20+ years' experience in the public and private health care arena. Areas of expertise include strategic planning, project management, process improvement, operations, administration, marketing and customer service. Caring, compassionate with strong organizational, analytical, problem solving, communication and relationship management skills. Manager of the AAMC Community Clinics and FastCare Clinics--HEZ Administrator.

**Ernest Carter** is the deputy health officer for Prince George's County Health Department (PGCHD) with more than 30 years of experience managing and delivering pediatric patient care, as well as more than 20 years of experience in the field of community based health information systems. He has been a strong advocate for efficient health system design and the use of health information technology to improve the quality of health in underserved communities. At the PGCHD, he provides direct oversight for the divisions of Family Services and Health & Wellness as well as oversight of all clinical providers. He serves on the Maryland Care Coordination Workgroup, Health Information Exchange Policy Board Workgroup, and Maryland Telemedicine Workgroup. He is currently on the boards of CRISP, the Maryland State Health Information Exchange and the Kennedy Krieger Institute. Dr. Carter has an AB degree in Physics from Harvard College, MD degree from Harvard Medical School and a Ph.D. degree in bioengineering from the University of Pennsylvania.

**Patricia Czapp** is Chair of Clinical Integration at Anne Arundel Medical Center. She is responsible for AAMC's population health improvement initiatives, including serving as chair of AAMC's Medicare Shared Savings Program ACO, clinical leader of an HSCRC-funded Regional Partnership, and organizer of a clinically integrated network of physician practices. She serves as President of the Maryland Academy of Family Physicians and Chair of the American Academy of Family Physicians' Commission on Health of the Public and Science.

**Darrell J. Gaskin**, PhD is the William C. and Nancy F. Richardson Professor of Health Policy and Director of the Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in the Department of Health Policy and Management. Dr. Gaskin is a health services researcher and an internationally known expert in health



and healthcare disparities, access to care for vulnerable populations, and safety net hospitals. He serves on the Editorial Boards of HSR, Medical Care and Medical Care Research and Review. He is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of AcademyHealth. He is a member of Board of Directors of Center for Health Policy Development, the governing body of the National Academy of State Health Policy. Dr. Gaskin received his Ph.D. in public health economics from the Johns Hopkins University. He holds a MS degree in economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a BA degree in economics from Brandeis University.

**Angela Mercier** serves as the Director for the Competent Care Connections (Caroline/Dorchester) Health Enterprise Zone program, which is part of her role as the Health Education Program Manager at the Dorchester County Health Department. She oversees several public health programs addressing health disparities, chronic diseases, substance abuse, and more. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Community Health at University of Maryland, College Park. She has over five years of experience in community organizing and health promotion, including forging partnerships to leverage resources and collaborate in encouraging healthy behaviors and improving health outcomes in a rural setting.

**Maha Sampath** is the Director of the Health Enterprise Zone at Bon Secours Baltimore Health System (BSBHS). She oversees the grant program funded by Maryland's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, which is aimed at decreasing disparities in cardiovascular disease in medically underserved populations in West Baltimore. Maha's focus areas included strategic planning, special operational projects, and stewardship. Maha received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Social Behavior from University of California, Irvine and earned her Master's in Health Services Administration at The George Washington University. She is also an active member of the National Association of Health Services Executives (NAHSE).

**Lori Werrell** is the Health Enterprise Zone (HEZ) Project Director and the Director of Population and Community Health at the MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. Lori Werrell has been with the Greater Lexington Park HEZ program since the grant writing process. She currently serves as the Program Director for the HEZ as part of her role as the Director of Health Connections at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. Health Connections is the population health/community health and education department of the hospital. Lori's current responsibilities include administrative oversight of primary care, care coordination, diabetes and nutrition clinic, breastfeeding resources center, chronic disease classes and programs, the HEZ, and other programs as part of population health and community benefit strategy to meet the areas of focus identified in the Community Health Needs Assessment Process.

