Dr. Balch, PhD
President and CEO
National Patient Advocate Foundation

Dr. Balch is the Chief Executive Officer of Patient Advocate Foundation and National Patient Advocate Foundation.

Dr. Balch has a decade of executive leadership in the non-profit sector with an emphasis on consensus-building and collaboration. From 2006 - 2013, he served as the Vice President of the Preventive Health Partnership -- a national health promotion collaboration between the American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, and American Heart Association. Prior to his work with the Preventive Health Partnership, Dr. Balch was the Executive Director of Friends of Cancer Research.

He has led numerous federal advocacy efforts on a range of issues both at the legislative and regulatory level over the years. For example, he helped to organize and lead a coalition that successfully fought for improvements in the regulatory process for the review of cancer drugs at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). He also contributed to the development of key federal policies related to the Affordable Care Act.

Dr. Balch serves on the Executive Board of the Patient Advocate Foundation and National Patient Advocate Foundation and serves on the board for Fight Colorectal Cancer. Dr. Balch also is a member of the National Committee for Quality Assurance's Wellness and Health Promotion Advisory Committee and serves on the Advisory Board for both the Patient Resource Cancer Guides and the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease.

He earned his PhD in environmental studies in 2003 from the University of California, Santa Cruz; his master’s degree in environmental sciences in 1997 from the University of Texas in San Antonio; his bachelor’s degree (cum laude) in biology in 1994 from Trinity University in San Antonio.

Stephen Bennett
President and CEO
United Cerebral Palsy

Stephen Bennett leads the international non-profit United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) as President and CEO. He has a 30-year history of success in business development, strategic planning, financial management, marketing, event production, and local and national public policy, having started his career as a Peace Corps/VISTA volunteer in South Central Los Angeles in the aftermath of the Watts riots.

As Executive Director of UCP of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties from 1978-1986, he developed housing and assisted living facilities and advanced public policy for people with disabilities at both the state and federal levels. Bennett was the CEO of AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) from 1989-1992, where he was credited with saving one of the nation’s largest AIDS service organizations from bankruptcy.
In 1992, he created and headed a national consulting practice focused on health care enterprises. The firm assisted for-profit and not-for-profit business through strategic consulting by developing business strategies and directing projects in managed care, financing, regional strategy, market strategy, public policy and e-health.

Bennett has served as adjunct faculty at the UCLA Anderson School of Management and at Pepperdine University. Throughout his career he has volunteered his talents to public service causes, working in mental health, breast cancer and disabilities. He has served on various boards, including ANGLE, Leadership 18, and the National Institute for the Severely Handicapped. He is a founding board member of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation and he currently chairs the Disability PAC. He was recently appointed a member of the Board of Directors of the ARCUS Foundation, a leading global foundation advancing pressing social justice and conservation issues.

A lifelong champion for civil rights for people with disabilities, Bennett uses his successful business experience to focus on the mission driven business of non-profit organizations so they can succeed in a challenging business climate.

Meryl Bloomrosen, MBI, MBA
Senior Vice President for Policy, Advocacy, and Research
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

Meryl Bloomrosen, MBI, MBA, has solid public and private sector experience in the health field. Currently, Ms. Bloomrosen is the Senior Vice President of Policy, Advocacy and Research for the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA). AAFA, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1953, is the leading patient organization for people with asthma and allergies, is the oldest asthma and allergy patient group in the world, and is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with asthma and allergic diseases.

Ms. Bloomrosen has worked on a range of key health programs and issues including prospective and value-based payment, privacy and security, information governance, health informatics, coding and classification systems, standards and interoperability, patient/consumer engagement, and the adoption and use of health information technology (electronic health records). She has extensive experience leading policy development, strategic advocacy and program implementation. Her interests include health informatics across the continuum of care, with an emphasis on data accessibility, integrity, latency, transparency, and portability.

She has convened and worked with diverse groups of multi-disciplinary stakeholders including patients, their families, and caregivers; senior executives; providers; researchers and academicians; policy makers; and government officials. Her areas of focus have included: health literacy, unintended consequences of HIT; data governance, uses and stewardship; patient safety; and HIT usability.

Previously, Meryl was the Vice President for Public Policy, Thought Leadership and Practice Excellence at AHIMA, where she led AHIMA’s government relations and public policy activities for more than 71,000 members. She also coordinated AHIMA’s Public
Relations and Public Affairs activities. Ms. Bloomrosen was the Vice President of Public Policy at AMIA where she developed, launched and managed AMIA’s Annual Invitational Health Policy Meeting. While working as a Vice President at the eHealth Initiative (eHI), she created, executed and managed initiatives such as a HRSA-funded, multimillion dollar cooperative agreement involving regional health information organizations. She was a senior policy analyst at the Prospective Payment Assessment Commission (ProPAC-now MEDPAC) where she researched topics such as DRGs, severity and risk adjustments and quality of care.

She has a graduate certificate in health information management from the U.S. Public Health Service and a graduate certificate in Biomedical Informatics from the Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU). She also has an MBA in information Systems from George Washington University and a Master’s Degree in Biomedical Informatics from OHSU. She has also completed the Medical Informatics MBL/NLM Course Fellowship program at the Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, MA.

Nathaniel Counts, JD
Senior Policy Associate
Mental Health America

Nathaniel Counts is the Senior Policy Associate at Mental Health America (MHA). In his work, he recommends and advocates for legislation and regulations that promote prevention and the provision of effective behavioral health care. Nathaniel received his J.D. cum laude from Harvard Law School, where he was a Petrie-Flom Center for Bioethics Student Fellow focusing on mental health and the social model of disability, and received his B.A. in Biology from Johns Hopkins. He is also on the Board of Directors and the Treasurer for the Flawless Foundation, a non-profit that focuses on communications and programming around children’s mental health.

Ana Fadich, MPA
Vice President
Men's Health Network

Ana serves as Vice President at Men’s Health Network (MHN). Her work involves the implementation of various programs and services related to outreach, promotion, and education. MHN is a national non-profit, educational health organization dedicated to improving the health and well being of men and their families, where they live, work, play and pray.

As a certified health educator (CHES), Ana develops targeted disease education materials & programs for men and their families on various health topics and leads discussions with participants at various community events in an effort to reduce health disparities that exist in underserved communities in the US.

Ana is actively sought out as a speaker and resource on men's health issues. She has been featured as an expert in many print and online media outlets as well as radio and
television. Ana has presented at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Federal Government Agencies, American Public Health Association (APHA,) corporate employer sites, and conferences. Ana represents MHN at prostate cancer advocacy, research, and policy meetings.

Ana is co-author for journal articles such as “The Economic Burden Shouldered By Public and Private Entities as a Consequence of Health Disparities between Men and Women” published in the American Journal of Men’s Health, contributes to white papers such as “A Framework For Advancing The Health Of Men and Boys In America, A Position Paper Issued by the Men’s Health Braintrust.

Within APHA’s Men’s Health Caucus, Ana serves as Program Chair, where she coordinates abstracts & sessions for Annual Meetings, manages membership and event planning. Ana holds a Bachelor’s degree in Biological Sciences from Mount St. Mary’s College in Los Angeles, CA, and a Master’s of Public Health degree from the University of Southern California. She currently resides in Arlington, VA.

Leah Howard, JD
Vice President of Government Relations and Advocacy
National Psoriasis Foundation

Leah Howard serves as the National Psoriasis Foundation's Vice President of Government Relations and Advocacy. Leah manages all aspects of the Foundation's federal and state GR and advocacy program which focuses on growing and supporting investment in psoriasis and psoriatic disease research and expanding access to treatments and health care providers. In this role, Leah guides the Foundation’s strategies on issues including step therapy, specialty tiering/cost sharing, and biosimilars. Leah is also currently serving a two-year term as volunteer co-chair of the NIAMS Coalition promoting and educating all stakeholders on the importance of research at the National Institute of Arthritis, Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS).

Prior to joining the National Psoriasis Foundation, Leah served as the Assistant Director of Policy and National Initiatives for BlazeSports America. From her ten years with B&D Consulting in Washington, D.C., she has extensive experience in public health policy development at the federal level focusing on the intersection of public health, patient advocacy, and communities. Leah has successfully guided health and community-based organizations in developing policy priorities and effective strategies that build awareness and support for critical health issues. She is skilled at leveraging creative collaborations and partnerships among community-based stakeholders and institutions. Leah gained local government experience as Director of Constituent Services for the City of Indianapolis. Leah also served as Assistant Finance Director in Mayor Bart Peterson's 1999 election campaign and a member of his transition team before becoming one of the first appointments to the administration.
Leah earned a Juris Doctor cum laude from George Mason University School of Law, and a Bachelor of Arts in Government from the University of Notre Dame. She is a member of the Virginia State Bar Association.

Gail Hunt
President and CEO
National Alliance for Caregiving

Gail Hunt is President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Alliance for Caregiving, a non-profit coalition dedicated to conducting research and developing national programs for family caregivers and the professionals who serve them. Prior to heading NAC, Ms. Hunt was President of her own aging services consulting firm for 14 years. She conducted corporate eldercare research for the National Institute on Aging and the Social Security Administration, developed training for caregivers with AARP and the American Occupational Therapy Association, and designed a corporate eldercare program for EAPs with the Employee Assistance Professional Association.

Prior to having her own firm, she was Senior Manager in charge of human services for the Washington, DC, office of KPMG Peat Marwick. Ms. Hunt attended Vassar College and graduated from Columbia University.

As a national expert in family caregiving and long-term care, Ms. Hunt served on the Policy Committee for the 2005 White House Conference on Aging, as well as on the CMS Advisory Panel on Medicare Education. She is chair of the National Center on Senior Transportation. Ms. Hunt is also a commissioner for the Center for Aging Services Technology (CAST) and on the Board of the Long-Term Quality Alliance. Ms. Hunt is a member of the Multiple Chronic Conditions Workforce Technical Expert Workgroup. She co-chairs the NQF MAP Person and Family-Centered Care task force. Additionally, Ms. Hunt is on the Governing Board of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI).

Nicole Kelly
Board Member
American Chronic Pain Association

A communications strategic planning consultant and writer, Nicole is retired after ten years as a Principal and Communications Practice Leader for Buck Consultants in Pittsburgh. She previously held the same positions with the William M. Mercer Company for eight years. Prior to her consulting work, she was Manager of Corporate Communications for Allegheny International and held public relations positions at Allegheny General Hospital. Her areas of expertise include communications strategic planning; opinion research, including both surveys and focus groups; multimedia personalized communications; video and web site development; executive communications; and broad human resources communications. She also taught introduction to professional writing, technical writing, writing for digital media, and the capstone class in the Chatham College Masters in Professional Writing program.
A graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, Nicole has served on the Board of Directors of the American Chronic Pain Association for more than 30 years. For the ACPA, she has developed educational videos, print materials, on-line surveys, and the organization’s web site and was instrumental in launching the Partners for Understanding Pain September Pain Awareness Month campaign. She is a past president of the ACPA board of directors.

**Lindsay Lang, MHSA, RN**  
**Senior Health Care Quality Improvement Specialist**  
**National Partnership of Women and Families**

Lindsay Lang currently serves as a Senior Health Care Quality Improvement Specialist at the National Partnership for Women and Families. In this role, she guides health care organizations as they implement a collaborative patient and family engagement model of care in which patients and families work in partnership with clinicians and staff to redesign health care delivery.

Lindsay joined the National Partnership with 15 years of experience within the health care industry. She received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Iowa and practiced as a Registered Nurse in oncology, hematology and dialysis care settings at the University of Kansas Hospital. She went on to earn a Master of Health Services Administration (MHSA) from the University of Kansas. During this time, she first developed an interest in working in health care quality improvement serving as a Hospital Liaison for the National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators. Upon completion of her MHSA, she was awarded an Administrative Fellowship with Trinity Health in Michigan. Prior to relocating to Washington, D.C., Lindsay worked as a Nurse Manager of an inpatient neurosciences unit at Froedtert Hospital in Wisconsin. Most recently, Lindsay was a Senior Director at the National Quality Forum, focusing on improving quality through the use of performance measurement in health care settings.

**Nicholas G. LaRocca, PhD**  
**Vice President of Healthcare Delivery and Policy Outreach**  
**National MS Society**

Dr. LaRocca is a psychologist who has worked in the field of MS for over 35 years. He was an associate professor at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and New York Medical College before joining the National MS Society in 1997. As Vice President of Health Care Delivery and Policy Research, he has responsibility for Society funding of research on symptoms of MS, rehabilitation, epidemiology, psychosocial issues, and health policy. He has a longstanding interest in cognition and co-authored a book on cognitive changes in MS in 2006. In 2011 he was appointed to the National Advisory Board on Medical Rehabilitation Research at the National Institutes of Health and was chairperson in 2013-2014. Dr. LaRocca is also co-director of the Multiple Sclerosis Outcome Assessments Consortium, a Society initiative to develop and qualify a new measure of disability for use in clinical trials of MS therapies. A telecommuter, he lives with his wife in the Mid-Coast area of Maine.
Paul Melmeyer, MPP
Assistant Director of Public Policy
National Organization for Rare Disorders

Paul Melmeyer serves as the Assistant Director of Public Policy at the National Organization for Rare Disorders. In this role, Paul engages in federal legislative and regulatory advocacy on behalf of rare disease patients, including working with Congress to pass pro-rare disease patient legislation. Paul also engages the FDA in ensuring the patient voice remains strong in the drug development and review process, and works with the NIH to ensure the rare disease research environment remains healthy. Prior to joining NORD, Paul held roles at the Center for American Progress, AARP, and in the United States Senate.

Caitlin Morris, MPA
Health System Transformation Program Director
Families USA

Caitlin Morris is the Health System Transformation Program Director at Families USA. Her work focuses on improving health care delivery and quality through evidence-based medicine, care coordination, patient-centered outcomes research, health information technology (HIT), and quality measurement. She helps develop and direct Families USA’s policy priorities and advocacy initiatives related to payment reform, delivery reform, and quality improvement and has written and contributed to reports and briefs on many health policy topics.

Prior to joining Families USA, Ms. Morris worked as a consultant in the Lewin Group’s Center for Comparative Effectiveness Research.

Ms. Morris holds a Master’s in Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin and a BA in political science from Southwestern University.

Ann Palmer
President and Chief Executive Officer
Arthritis Foundation

Ann Palmer joined the Arthritis Foundation in September 2013 with more than 30 years of successful nonprofit experience at three large voluntary health organizations: the American Cancer Society, the American Diabetes Association and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

With a BS in education from the University of Delaware, Palmer began her career with the American Cancer Society in 1979, holding numerous roles of increasing responsibility over 18 years. In 1997, she joined the American Diabetes Association to oversee increased fundraising for their Mid-Atlantic region, and led a nationwide operational restructuring that increased efficiency. During her 12 years at the Cystic Fibrosis
Foundation, Palmer’s leadership brought new business systems and a great team of staff and volunteers who annually raised over $100 million net income.

Palmer is a member of the board of directors of the National Health Council, which consists of voluntary health agencies committed to helping people with chronic diseases and disabilities and their family caregivers. She’s also recognized as one of the 100 most influential leaders in the health care industry by the Atlanta Business Chronicle.

Palmer is passionate about her work as the Arthritis Foundation’s leader. She sees the daily challenges people with arthritis face, is inspired by their courage and makes meeting their needs the organization’s top priority.

John Schall, MPP
President and CEO
Caregiver Action Network

John Schall has more than 25 years of bipartisan experience in senior positions with the Executive and Legislative branches of government. He is a public policy and communications professional with noted expertise in a wide range of policy fields, including health care, labor, education, economic development, taxation, and budget policy. He has managed large staff organizations.

John Schall became Chief Executive Officer of Caregiver Action Network (formerly National Family Caregivers Association) in June 2012. Prior to joining CAN, he was Deputy CEO of the Parkinson's Action Network. As Vice President of Jefferson Government Relations from 2005 to 2009, he represented a number of health care companies and patient advocacy associations. Mr. Schall also served as the President and CEO of the National Congress for Community Economic Development (NCCED), a national trade association representing 3,600 anti-poverty organizations across the country.

Mr. Schall previously served as Executive Director of the National Business Coalition on E-Commerce and Privacy, comprised of 15 of America’s largest corporations. He also managed former Senator Robert Dole’s consulting business at the law firm of Alston & Bird, LLP, overseeing contracts with many of America’s top corporations and several foreign countries.

Previous experience includes serving as Executive Director of the Project on the Advocacy of U.S. Interests Abroad from 1997 to 1999 – a bipartisan blue-ribbon commission of 14 former Cabinet-level officials to examine the conduct of U.S. foreign affairs in the 21st Century. Mr. Schall served as Senator Bob Dole’s Chief Budget Advisor in the Senate Majority Leader’s Office. He was also Guest Scholar at The Brookings Institution, and a Fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. In 1994, he narrowly lost his bid for election to Congress from Michigan’s 13th District.
Mr. Schall served as Chief of Staff of the U.S. Department of Labor from 1991 to 1993 and was a White House Domestic Policy Adviser to President George H.W. Bush and Deputy of the White House Domestic Policy Council from 1989 to 1991. He served as Legislative Director for then Rep. Connie Mack (R-FL). He also held positions in the White House Office of Management and Budget from 1984 to 1987.

Mr. Schall is a regular lecturer on “How the Senate Works” for the Brookings Institution and for Georgetown University’s Government Affairs Institute. He has provided expert testimony before Congress; been interviewed by numerous media outlets; and has authored articles in Roll Call, the Detroit News, RenalLIFE Magazine, Electronic Commerce and Business Law Report, and several other publications. He earned a Master of Public Policy degree from Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, and a B.A. with distinction and honors in political science from the University of Michigan.

Laura Sol
Chief of Staff to the CEO
American Heart Association

As Chief of Staff, Laura Sol serves as a key staff partner to the Chief Executive Officer and has organization-wide accountability for strategic planning and new business initiatives that integrate across functions of the association. Laura is also responsible to develop strategic partnerships and relationships on behalf of the CEO, that result in highly motivated and fully engaged volunteers and partners while achieving the goals of the American Heart Association.

Laura joined the American Heart Association’s New England Affiliate in 1999, where she worked as Vice President of Development and Field Operations for the Metro Boston area. She was promoted to Senior Vice President for the Northeast Affiliate and oversaw Development, Corporate Relations and Donor Relations. After a merger with the New York Affiliate, she became a member of the Founders Affiliate Executive Management Team and Senior Vice President for Metro Boston. In 2008, Laura was recruited to the American Heart Association’s National Center in as Vice President of Cause Initiatives and Integrated Marketing. In 2010, she assumed leadership for the American Stroke Association as well. Most recently, Laura has been responsible for Patient Markets and the American Stroke Association for the Strategic Markets & Consumer Business Innovation Department of the American Heart Association (AHA). Her department was charged to transform research findings into consumer directed and desired programs that educate and influence consumers, patients and families and provide meaningful support and engagement for recovery for health. Laura’s team oversaw strategic and business planning and programmatic execution for multiple Patient conditions and risk factors.

Laura has over 25+ years of successful voluntary health organization experience that has allowed her to utilize her business, marketing and sales experience. Before joining the AHA, she worked for Prevent Blindness America and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in a variety of fundraising, communication and management leadership roles. Laura is a proud
alumnus of The Ohio State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Communications. She and her husband Jeff reside in Dallas, Texas. Her step-daughter Alice lives and works in Boston, Massachusetts.

Andrew Sperling, JD  
Director of Federal Legislative Advocacy  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

Andrew Sperling is the Director of Federal Legislative Advocacy for NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI is the largest national consumer and family organization representing people with serious brain disorders such as schizophrenia, major depression and bipolar disorder. With over 210,000 members and 1,200 affiliates, NAMI is engaged in advocacy, research and public education aimed at improving the lives of people with severe mental illnesses through access to treatment, employment and decent, safe and affordable housing. Mr. Sperling directs NAMI's legislative advocacy program in Congress and before federal agencies. Since 1994, he has also served as a Co-Chair of the Consortium for Citizens With Disabilities (CCD) Housing Task Force – a coalition of national disability advocacy and provider organizations dedicated to promoting policies and funding to increase access to affordable housing opportunities for non-elderly adults with severe disabilities. Prior to joining NAMI, Mr. Sperling held the position of deputy director of government relations for the National Community Mental Healthcare Council and was a legislative assistant for U.S. Representative Dick Swett (D-NH). Mr. Sperling earned his Bachelors of Arts degree from Tulane University. After graduating from Tulane, Sperling attended George Washington University where he received a Masters of Arts, and in 1992, he earned a law degree from the Franklin Pierce Law Center.

Peter Thomas, JD  
Principal, Powers, Pyles, Sutter & Verville  
Counsel, Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition

Peter W. Thomas is a principal with the Washington, DC based law firm of Powers, Pyles, Sutter & Verville. He has been a legislative and regulatory advocate for over twenty years on behalf of health care and post-acute care providers as well as consumers with injuries, illnesses, disabilities and chronic conditions. He represents before Congress and the federal agencies associations that represent, physiatrists, rehabilitation hospitals, orthotic and prosthetic providers, recreational therapists, and brain injury providers and consumers, among others. Mr. Thomas helps coordinate multiple coalitions focused on health and disability advocacy, rehabilitation research policy and funding, and access to rehabilitation services and devices. He serves on the American Trauma Society board of directors where he chairs the Trauma Survivors Network Committee and is part of a team funded by PCORI to study patient-centric improvements to trauma care. Mr. Thomas also serves on the
National Quality Forum’s Patient and Family Centered Care Committee which evaluates and validates function and quality of life quality measures. He also served for three years on the Advisory Board for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. He has testified numerous times before Congress, authored hundreds of articles on health and disability policy, and is a co-author of a book on implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. He attended Georgetown University Law Center and Boston College, and is a member of the New York State and District of Columbia Bars.

Laura Thornhill, JD  
Manager of Regulatory Affairs – Public Policy Division  
Alzheimer’s Association

Laura Thornhill is the Manager of Regulatory Affairs in the Public Policy Division of the Alzheimer’s Association. In this role, she helps to shape federal regulatory policy affecting persons with dementia, their families, and providers. She also serves as a liaison to federal agencies working on issues related to dementia and caregiving, and monitors progress on the National Plan to Address Alzheimer’s Disease. Previously, Laura served as a policy analyst within AARP’s Public Policy Institute and the American Academy of Nursing, researching and promoting professional nursing issues and their impact on the health care system. Prior to her career in health policy, she worked on professional regulatory issues for the Missouri Attorney General’s Office. A proud Midwesterner, Laura received her bachelor’s degree from the University of Kansas and her JD from the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law.

Ronnie Todaro, MPH  
Vice President, National Programs  
Parkinson’s Disease Foundation

Veronica Todaro is Vice President of National Programs for the Parkinson’s Disease Foundation (PDF) where she is responsible for strategic initiatives that further patient involvement in clinical research, medical care and support services. Ms. Todaro created and leads Parkinson’s Advocates in Research (PAIR), a national research advocacy initiative that advances the role of people with Parkinson’s in the clinical research process. The PAIR program features a three-day Learning Institute that prepares people with Parkinson’s and care partners for collaborating with the research community. Ms. Todaro has led multi-stakeholder roundtables that focus on barriers to clinical research participation, including topics on building patient trust in clinical research and engaging community physicians and has written and speaks on the authentic engagement of patients along the clinical research continuum. Prior to her work with PDF, Ms. Todaro was a partner with the Carol-Trevelyan Strategy Group, a Washington D.C. based public policy and grassroots organizing consulting practice and served in a number of leadership roles within Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

Ms. Todaro was recently invited to serve the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute's (PCORI) Advisory Panel on Patient Engagement. She is past Chair of the
Patient Leadership Council of the Clinical Trials Transformation Initiative (CTTI) and serves on CTTI’s Executive Committee. Ms. Todaro is a member of the Institutional Review Board at the North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System and has served on the Editorial Board for the Global Forum, the journal of the Drug Information Association. She holds a Bachelor’s of Science in Public Policy from Cornell University and a Master of Public Health in Planning and Administration from the University of Michigan.

Sara Traigle van Geertruyden, JD
Executive Director
Partnership to Improve Patient Care (PIPC)

Sara Traigle van Geertruyden counsels and manages PIPC, a diverse group of healthcare organizations representing patients, healthcare providers, researchers and innovators, and other groups to promote comparative effectiveness research that supports patient access, informed healthcare decision-making and continued medical progress. In this role, she is responsible for assuring that the voice of PIPC’s members is heard by those implementing CER programs, including PCORI. She came to PIPC as a healthcare and welfare policy expert with 14 years of experience. Previously, she worked for former Senator John Breaux from 1996-2003. In 2003, she joined the healthcare policy group at Patton Boggs LLP, and in 2011 she joined Thorn Run Partners. She received a BA from Wake Forest University and a JD from Catholic University.

PCORI Staff

Joe Selby, MD, MPH
Executive Director

A family physician, clinical epidemiologist, and health services researcher, Dr. Selby has more than 35 years of experience in patient care, research, and administration. He is responsible for identifying strategic issues and opportunities for PCORI and implementing and administering programs authorized by the PCORI Board of Governors.

Dr. Selby joined PCORI from Kaiser Permanente, Northern California, where he was Director of the Division of Research for 13 years and oversaw a department of more than 50 investigators and 500 research staff members working on more than 250 ongoing studies. He was with Kaiser Permanente for 27 years. An accomplished researcher, Dr. Selby has authored more than 200 peer-reviewed articles and continues to conduct research, primarily in the areas of diabetes outcomes and quality improvement. His publications cover a spectrum of topics, including effectiveness studies of colorectal cancer screening strategies; treatment effectiveness, population management, and disparities in diabetes mellitus; primary care delivery; and quality measurement. Dr. Selby was elected to membership in the Institute of Medicine in 2009 and was a member of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality study section for Health Care Quality and Effectiveness from 1999 to 2003.
A native of Fulton, Missouri, Dr. Selby received his MD from Northwestern University and his MPH from the University of California, Berkeley. He was a commissioned officer in the Public Health Service Corps from 1976 to 1983 and received the Commissioned Officer’s Award in 1981.

Jean Slutsky, PA, MSPH  
Chief Officer for Engagement and Dissemination Officer

Jean R. Slutsky is the Chief Engagement and Dissemination Officer at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She leads PCORI’s Engagement Program and growing dissemination and implementation planning efforts. She also serves as Director of PCORI’s Communication and Dissemination Research Program.

Before joining PCORI, Slutsky directed the Center for Outcomes and Evidence at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, where she conceived and implemented the Effective Health Care program. The Effective Health Care program is an integrated program of research, stakeholder engagement, research training, and dissemination and implementation of comparative effectiveness research. Slutsky is particularly interested in pragmatic user-driven research and its implementation into healthcare decision making. Slutsky received her baccalaureate degree from the University of Iowa, trained as a Physician Assistant at the University of Southern California, and received a MSPH in health policy from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Bryan Luce, PhD, MS, MBA  
Chief Science Officer

Dr. Bryan R. Luce is Chief Science Officer at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). He is responsible for leading the development and implementation of PCORI’s patient-centered comparative clinical effectiveness research (CER) agenda.

Luce previously founded the outcomes research firm MEDTAP® International, serving as its chairman, president, and chief executive officer, and was the senior vice president for science policy at the United BioSource Corporation. Earlier, Luce was director of Battelle’s Centers for Public Health Research and Evaluation; director of the Office of Research and Demonstrations, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; and a senior analyst at Office of Technology Assessment of the United States Congress. Luce’s research has focused on improving methods and related policies for more efficient healthcare decision making. He has authored more than 100 scientific publications, including three textbooks on health technology assessment, health policy, and health economics.

In 2008, Luce founded the Pragmatic Approaches to Comparative Effectiveness (PACE) Initiative, which studies novel methods to conduct analytical efficiency comparative effectiveness trials. Previously, he founded the Bayesian Initiative in Health Economics and Outcomes Research. He has been an advisor to numerous government and nonprofit
agencies, as well as pharmaceutical and device firms worldwide; a member or chair of socioeconomic and public health policy advisory boards for leading biopharmaceutical companies; and a member of the Medicare Evidence Development & Coverage Advisory Committee (MedCAC). Luce is also a past president of the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) and in 2008 received the Society’s Avedis Donabedian Outcomes Research Lifetime Achievement Award. He has held adjunct faculty positions in the Department of Health Policy at Jefferson Medical College, the Leonard D. Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics at the University of Southern California, and the Department of Pharmacy at the University of Washington.

A former Special Forces Officer, Luce is a Lieutenant Colonel (Retired), US Army Reserves. He holds MS (public health) and MBA degrees from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and a PhD in health services research from the University of California at Los Angeles.

Sue Sheridan, MBA MIM, DHL
Director, Patient Engagement

Sue Sheridan, MBA, MIM, DHL, is the Director of Patient Engagement for the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She leads the Patient Engagement team, which develops and implements tools, programs, and processes to encourage meaningful engagement of patients and other stakeholders in all PCORI’s activities. Before joining PCORI, Sheridan was the external lead of the Patients for Patient Safety program at the World Health Organization (WHO), where she helped develop and implement a global network of patients who built national and regional strategic plans for patient engagement for various WHO initiatives. Sheridan had previously spent 10 years in patient advocacy inspired by adverse family experiences in the healthcare system. Sheridan cofounded and is past president of Parents of Infants and Children with Kernicterus (brain damage from jaundice), who engaged with the healthcare system to implement a new standard of care in jaundice management. She is also a co-founder of Consumers Advancing Patient Safety, which helps organizations engage patients as partners in developing patient-safety solutions. Prior to her leadership in patient engagement, she worked as a finance banker for international trade. Sheridan received her BA from Albion College, her MIM and MBA from the Thunderbird School of Global Management, and her DHL (Doctor of Humane Letters) from Adrian College.

Lia Hotchkiss, MPH
Director, Eugene Washington Engagement Awards Program

Lia Hotchkiss, MPH, is Director of the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards Program at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She sets the strategic direction and oversees the implementation of the program, which aims to support
more active integration of patient, research, and other stakeholder communities in the patient-centered outcomes research process.

Before joining PCORI, Hotchkiss was at the UPMC Health Plan, where she initiated, planned, and executed projects and programs for the consumer innovation department. She also served as director of the Agency for HealthCare Research and Quality’s (AHRQ) Comparative Effectiveness Research Portfolio. In this role, she worked with staff across AHRQ to develop research projects, wrote requests for applications and program announcements, and established portfolio metrics.

Hotchkiss received a BA in linguistics and biology from the University of Rochester, and an MPH in epidemiology from the University at Albany School of Public Health. She is also a certified project management professional and Six Sigma Green Belt.

**Hal Sox, MD**

*Director, Research Portfolio Development*

Harold (Hal) Sox, MD, is Director of Research Portfolio Development in the Office of the Chief Science Officer at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). Working closely with program directors, he is responsible for the development of PCORI’s research portfolio. He also is a Program Officer within the Clinical Effectiveness Research Program.

A general internist and clinical epidemiologist, Sox has 45 years of experience in patient care, clinical research, and administration. His research has been in medical decision-making: specifically, the development and validation of clinical prediction rules, cognitive biases in decision making, and utility assessment. He has published more than 200 articles, book chapters and books, including the textbook Medical Decision Making, which is now in a second edition.

Sox previously was chair of the department of medicine at Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College. He chaired the US Preventive Services Task Force, the Medicare Coverage Advisory Committee, and three study committees of the Institute of Medicine, including one that set national priorities for comparative effectiveness research. He has been president of the American College of Physicians and the Society for Medical Decision Making. He was editor-in-chief of Annals of Internal Medicine and is now a member of the JAMA editorial board. He was elected to the Institute of Medicine in 1993.

**Suz Schrandt, JD**

*Deputy Director, Patient Engagement*

Suzanne Schrandt, JD, is the Deputy Director of Patient Engagement at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She is responsible for supporting the Director of Patient Engagement in creating networks and engaging patients across the nation to provide broad-based input on the development and execution of PCORI’s research. Schrandt has
been involved in patient education and advocacy since being diagnosed with a form of rheumatoid arthritis as a teenager. For more than 15 years, she has advocated on behalf of children and adults with arthritis and has been engaged in numerous patient and provider education initiatives aimed at increasing early diagnosis and appropriate, patient-centered management of chronic disease. Before coming to PCORI, Schrandt served as the health reform strategy team leader for the Kansas Health Institute, where she educated the state's policymakers, providers, and consumers on the implications of the Affordable Care Act. While there, Schrandt also led the Kansas Legislative Health Academy, an intensive educational experience for select Kansas legislators. Schrandt also previously served as the Coordinator of Public Health and Public Policy for the Arthritis Foundation in Kansas City and as a Research Associate for a Human Genome Research Institute Ethical, Legal, and Social Issues project. She is a member of the Kansas Bar and the American Health Lawyers Association.

Laura Forsythe, PhD, MPH
Associate Director, Evaluation and Analysis

Laura Forsythe, PhD, MPH, is an Associate Director for the Evaluation and Analysis department at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She is responsible for evaluating PCORI’s engagement activities and overseeing externally funded projects.

Forsythe is experienced in conducting research on facilitating adjustment to chronic illness. Her work has examined how psychological factors, the social context, and interventions affect pain, mood, and functioning among chronic pain populations. Most recently, Forsythe was a Cancer Prevention Fellow at the National Cancer Institute. Her work there focused on the development of a more effective approach to caring for cancer survivors through the study of survivor, provider, and healthcare system influences on health and well-being after cancer.

Forsythe received a BS in biology and psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and an MPH with a concentration in Epidemiology and Biostatistics from Johns Hopkins University. She also earned a PhD in clinical health psychology from the University of Alabama and completed her clinical residency at the VA Maryland Healthcare System/University of Maryland School of Medicine Internship Consortium.

Kelly Dunham, MPP
Program Manager, Science, Research Portfolio Development

Kelly Dunham, MPP, is a Program Manager, Research Portfolio Development in the office of the Chief Science Officer at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). Dunham joined PCORI in 2013. Prior to this role, she was a Program Officer in the CER Methods and Infrastructure Program where she managed PCORI’s portfolio of
projects that focus on the development of methods related to patient and stakeholder engagement and patient-centered outcomes in CER.

Dunham has more than a decade of experience in health services research. She joined PCORI from the Child Health Evaluation and Research (CHEAR) Unit at the University of Michigan, where she managed multiple projects on the pediatric workforce funded by the American Board of Pediatrics Foundation. Prior to her work at CHEAR, Dunham worked as a project manager at the Center for Health Policy/Center for Primary Care Outcomes Research (CHP/PCOR) at Stanford University, where she coordinated an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality funded study on improving safety culture and outcomes in healthcare organizations and an international investigation of technological change in health care funded by the National Institutes of Health.

Dunham received a BA in anthropology from Indiana University and an MPP from the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan.

Erica Sarnes, MA
Training Manager

Erica Sarnes, MA, is the Training Manager at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She manages and serves as the point of contact for all PCORI training and development opportunities for staff and external stakeholders.

Before joining PCORI, Sarnes was an independent consultant focused on aligning learning and development initiatives with organizational strategy. She has worked cross-functionally to execute strategic training initiatives that enhance development, business performance, employee and team productivity, and key stakeholder engagement.

Sarnes has assessed organizational learning needs and has managed the development, implementation, and evaluation of learning and development programs. She is particularly interested in leadership development at all organizational levels.

Sarnes received a BA in psychology from the University of Virginia and an MA in industrial/organizational psychology from George Mason University. She also has post-graduate certificates in organization development, coactive coaching, and human resource management.

Michelle Johnston-Fleece, MPH
Engagement Officer

Michelle Johnston-Fleece, MPH, is an Engagement Officer at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She acts as a liaison between the Engagement and Science programs to help
manage the organization’s portfolio of research projects, focusing on the engagement of patients and other healthcare stakeholders in each project.

Before joining PCORI, Johnston-Fleece was director of policy and advocacy at Cancer Support Community (CSC), where she oversaw the policy and advocacy activities at the federal level and in coordination with CSC’s local affiliates across the United States. Johnston-Fleece also served as patient experience manager at Einstein Healthcare Network, where she led the patient advocacy and patient experience improvement efforts for a large, urban, safety net healthcare system in Philadelphia. Before that, Johnston-Fleece was the senior policy and research analyst at the American Board of Internal Medicine and ABIM Foundation, where she was responsible for providing research, policy analysis, writing, and project management. She also has written the "Caregiving with Confidence" column for Cancer Today, a publication of the American Association for Cancer Research, for more than two years.

Johnston-Fleece has a BA in sociology and media studies from New York University, and an MPH with a focus in health systems and policy from the UMDNJ School of Public Health (now known as Rutgers School of Public Health).

Kim Bailey, MS
Engagement Officer

Kimberly Bailey, MS, is an Engagement Officer at the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). She acts as a liaison between Engagement and Science as active portfolio management is carried out.

Before joining PCORI, Bailey was research director and program director for health system improvement at Families USA, a national nonprofit advocacy organization committed to securing quality, affordable health care and coverage for all Americans. She led Families USA’s work on payment reform, delivery reform, and quality improvement, and provided quantitative and policy analysis on a range of healthcare issues. In addition, Bailey served as a PCORI reviewer and reviewer mentor, a member of the Patient Engagement Advisory Panel, and a member of the PCORI Evaluation Group.

Bailey holds a BA in planning, public policy, and management from the University of Oregon and an MS in health policy, planning, and financing from the London School of Economics and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.