



2023 Federal Advocacy Workshop

Speakers

Caitlin Ruppel - *Public Health Advisor. Office of the U.S. Surgeon General*

Caitlin Ruppel, MPH joined the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General in June 2022 as a Public Health Advisor on the Science and Policy Team. She brings a decade of experience working in program planning and health policy advocacy to her role. Most recently, Caitlin served as the Government and Public Programs Manager at Primary Diagnostics, Inc., supporting the operations of COVID-19 testing and vaccination sites nationwide. Caitlin earned her B.A. in urban and environmental policy from Occidental College and her MPH in health policy and management from the University of California, Berkeley.

Sarah Schmidt - *Health Policy Director. Office of U.S. Sen. John Thune (R-D)*

Sarah Schmidt currently serves as Health Policy Director for the Senate Republican Whip, John Thune. Prior to joining Senator Thune's office this past March, Sarah spent five years in the private sector. Most recently she led the first government relations office for the health business at Palantir, a data analytics and AI company. She also spent four years as the Senior Director of Government Affairs at CVS Health where she was responsible for developing CVS's federal policy and advocacy priorities. She helped usher the company through its merger with Aetna in 2018 and led the company's GA efforts to protect and grow Medicare Advantage. Prior to joining CVS, Sarah spent nearly six years working on Capitol Hill, serving as Health Policy Advisor to Senator Rob Portman of Ohio and Congressman Michael Burgess from Texas. Sarah received her Masters of Public Health from George Washington University and her Bachelor's degree from St. Olaf College in Minnesota.

Brian W. Lindberg - *Executive Director, Consumer Coalition for Quality Health Care*

Brian W. Lindberg is the Executive Director of the Consumer Coalition for Quality Health Care. Prior to his current position, Mr. Lindberg worked in Congress for 10 years – most recently as the staff director of the House Select Committee on Aging's Subcommittee on Housing and Consumer Interests, and prior to that on the Senate Special Committee on Aging. Mr. Lindberg holds a Master's in the Management of Human Services from the Florence Heller Graduate School at Brandeis University, a Bachelor of Social Work from Temple University, and studied health and human services at the University of Stockholm's International Graduate School.

Angela Banks - *Vice President, Policy, Pharmaceutical Care Management Association*

Angela Banks is Vice President, Policy for PCMA. Angela joined PCMA by way of UnitedHealth Group where she served as Vice President, External Affairs and was responsible for leading the strategic approach to prescription drug and pharmacy care services policy as well as health equity policy.

She specializes in health policy, patient advocacy, and market access. Angela strives to effectively collaborate with payers, pharmaceutical industry executives, academia, patient groups, and

regulators to address barriers to access and affordability and find innovative approaches to controlling healthcare costs, ensuring high quality care, and improving health outcomes.

Prior to joining UnitedHealth Group, Angela held many roles within the pharmaceutical industry including roles at EMD Serono and AstraZeneca focusing on access, advocacy, and affordability for oncology patients, and Otsuka Pharmaceutical where she worked on the first ever FDA approved digital medicine product and explored unique data challenges including bioethical issues related to patient privacy, consent, and information dissemination.

Angela holds a Master of Arts in Government and a Master of Business Administration, both from Johns Hopkins University.

Sohini Gupta - *Executive Vice President, AHIP*

Sohini Gupta, J.D., is Executive Vice President, Government Affairs & Innovations at AHIP. In this role, she leads AHIP's advocacy teams in Washington, D.C., and in all 50 states, engaging with legislators and policymakers on matters impacting coverage, care, and patient outcomes.

Gupta joins AHIP with 25 years' experience in policymaking, advocacy, and strategic engagement with the government. She has served as a Senate Health and Social Policy Counsel and as a lobbyist, consultant, and strategist for payers and providers and for pharmaceutical, biotechnology, health, technology, and financial services companies. Gupta has held government affairs leadership roles at UnitedHealth Group; WellCare, which was acquired by Centene; the American Hospital Association; and Mehlman Castagnetti Rosen & Thomas

Gupta joins AHIP from Global Medical Response, where she led government affairs for the nation's largest ground and air emergency response company. She earned her undergraduate degree from Butler University and a J.D. from Indiana University.

Heather Meade - *Principal, Washington Counsel, Ernst & Young, LLC*

Heather Meade is a principal at Washington Council Ernst & Young. She specializes in health care policy and advises business leaders, policy makers, trade associations, coalitions and not-for-profit organizations on a broad range of policy issues. She provides strategic legislative and regulatory advice on employee benefits, the Affordable Care Act, health transformation and health care coverage.

Heather has been involved in the legislative and regulatory implementation of major health legislation over the past decade leading large stakeholder coalitions and other initiatives. In this role, Heather is a frequent speaker on health policy, including health care disparities, health care reform and the political process and has been quoted in major publications such as the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Kaiser Health News, Stat News, Politico and others.

Prior to joining EY, Heather served as ERISA counsel in matters related to health care, employee benefits and public policy at the Groom Law Group. She also worked on Capitol Hill for members of the Washington delegation and externed for Washington state Supreme Court Justice Susan Owens.

Heather is a member of the bar of New York and the District of Columbia.