MASSACHUSETTS
HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION

2026 HEALTH CARE COST TRENDS HEARING

THE AFFORDABILITY IMPERATIVE: SECURING A SUSTAINABLE HEALTH CARE FUTURE

NOVEMBER 10, 2026

PROGRAM BOOK



ABOUT THE HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION

The Massachusetts Health Policy Commission (HPC), established in 2012, is an independent state agency charged with monitoring health care cost trends and making policy recommendations to improve the affordability of health care for all residents of the Commonwealth. Through data-driven analysis, actionable policy insights, public accountability, and innovative investments, the HPC seeks to improve health care delivery, lower costs, and reduce health disparities. The HPC is committed to better health and better care – at a lower cost – for all residents of the Commonwealth.

WELCOME

Welcome to the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission's 2026 Health Care Cost Trends Hearing: **The Affordability Imperative: Securing a Sustainable Health Care Future**. We are honored to have Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell join us to open the hearing this year.

This annual hearing offers an important opportunity to convene and discuss the most pressing issues challenging the stability and sustainability of our health care system, including the consumer affordability crisis, workforce constraints, financial volatility, high prescription drug costs, and persistent health disparities. This year, the challenges are compounded by recent federal policy changes scheduled to reduce support for the state's health care programs and increase the number of uninsured.

Recent polls have found that Americans rank health care costs as their number one affordability challenge, outranking housing, food, utilities, and gasoline. In Massachusetts, health care spending has grown faster than household income growth in recent years, and by 2025, the Commonwealth had the fourth highest family health insurance premiums in the country at $29,619 annually on average.

When including out of pocket spending such as copayments and deductible spending, the average annual cost of health care for a family exceeded $34,000 -- nearly $3,000 per month. As health care spending grows as a portion of household income, more and more families incur medical debt and forgo needed care due to cost, and have less money left each month to pay for other household necessities.

The 2026 Health Care Cost Trends Hearing will bring together industry leaders, policymakers, clinicians, and community members to reflect on the policy reforms necessary to advance the Commonwealth's health care affordability, access, and equity goals, including the recommendations put forth by the Healey-Driscoll Administration's Health Care Affordability Working Group (HCAWG).

In addition to the in-person testimony provided today, the HPC received written testimony from 57 health plans and providers, pharmaceutical manufacturers, pharmacy benefit managers, significant equity investors, real estate investment trusts, and management services organizations operating in Massachusetts. That written testimony is available alongside the hearing materials and livestream of today's proceedings at www.MassHPC.gov/2026-cth.

We encourage you to join the conversation on social media via #CTH26. We thank you for your engagement and participation in today's hearing.

Sincerely,

DEBORAH DEVAUX
Chair

DAVID SELTZ
Executive Director

2026 HEALTH CARE COST TRENDS HEARING

THE AFFORDABILITY IMPERATIVE: SECURING A SUSTAINABLE HEALTH CARE FUTURE

Tuesday, November 10, 2026
8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Suffolk University Law School
Boston, MA

Livestream
MassHPC.gov/2026-cth

8:30 AM	**REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST**
9:00 AM	**CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME** **Deborah Devaux,** HPC Board Chair **David Seltz,** HPC Executive Director
9:15 AM	**OPENING REMARKS** **The Honorable Andrea Joy Campbell,** Attorney General
9:30 AM	**RESEARCH PRESENTATION** **The Affordability Imperative: From Research to Reform** **David Seltz,** HPC Executive Director
10:00 AM	**PANEL 1** **Beyond the Numbers: Real World Perspectives on Health Care Challenges** *Moderator: Sandra Cotterell* – **Leslie Diaz,** HelpLine Director, Health Care For All – **Mimi Gardner, MPH, MA,** Vice President and Chief of Community Partnerships and Health Impact, NeighborHealth – **Victoria Selser,** Epidemiologist, City of Fitchburg Health Department – **Joseph Szczechowicz,** President, SLS Outdoor Living & Landscaping – **Michael Wilson, PharmD,** Pharmacist and Owner of Crawford Drug; President of the Board, Massachusetts Independent Pharmacists Association
11:00 AM	**PANEL 2** **A Sustainable Safety Net: Focus on Access, Coverage, and Equity** *Moderator: Martin Cohen* – **Peter D. Banko,** President and CEO, Baystate Health – **Alastair Bell, MD, MBA,** President and CEO, Boston Medical Center Health System – **Brenda Rodriguez, MBA,** CEO, Lynn Community Health Center – **Ryan Schwarz, MD, MBA,** Massachusetts' Medicaid Director and Assistant Secretary for MassHealth

12:00 PM

LUNCH BREAK

12:45 PM

PANEL 3

The Right Care in the Right Place: Innovative Partnerships for Better Outcomes and Lower Costs

Moderator: Ashley Blackburn

RIGHT CARE, RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

- **Susan Coakley,** President and CEO, Aspire Health and Community Services
- **William W. Tollefsen, MD, MSc, MBA, FAEMS,** Chair, Department of Emergency Medicine, EMS and MIH Medical Director, South Shore Health

HPC PATHWAYS INVESTMENT PROGRAM

- **Lisa Felci Jimenez, MSN, RN, LSW,** Director of Clinical Services, Mystic Valley Aging Services
- **Chris Mauro, LICSW, CCM,** Director of Social Work and Case Management, MelroseWakefield Hospital

1:30 PM

RESEARCH PRESENTATION

Data Insights on Health Care Cost Drivers and Dynamics

David Seltz, HPC Executive Director

1:45 PM

PANEL 4

Responding to Health Care Cost Growth: Trends, Tradeoffs, and Policy Solutions

Moderator: Christopher Leibman

- **Niyum Gandhi,** Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, Mass General Brigham
- **Patrick Gilligan,** President and CEO, Point32Health
- **Joseph M. Shields, Esq.,** Founder and President, Transparency Rising
- **Michael Valenta,** Chief Strategic Customer Officer, Johnson & Johnson
- **Matthew Veno,** Executive Director, Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission

3:00 PM

PANEL 5

A Call to Action: A Leadership Agenda for Health Care Affordability

Moderator: Deborah Devaux

- **Sarah Iselin,** President and CEO, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
- **Audrey Morse Gasteier,** Executive Director, Massachusetts Health Connector
- **Diana Richardson,** President and CEO, Merrimack Health
- **Christina Severin,** President and CEO, Community Care Cooperative (C3)

4:00 PM

REFLECTIONS AND DISCUSSION

HPC Board of Commissioners, Office of the Attorney General, Center for Health Information and Analysis

4:15 PM

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

For more information and to sign up to testify, visit: www.masshpc.gov/2026-cth

4:30 PM

ADJOURNMENT

2026 PRE-FILED TESTIMONY

Each year, the HPC calls for written pre-filed testimony from health care entities to inform the annual Health Care Cost Trends Hearing. In 2026, all entities were asked to comment on the work of the Healey-Driscoll Administration's Health Care Affordability Working Group (HCAWG), which published twelve policy recommendations to advance health care affordability in the Commonwealth in August.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR HEALTH PLANS AND PROVIDERS

INNOVATION

40% of entities called for policies that streamline patient care and move care to lower-cost settings.

PRIMARY CARE

36% of entities shared an interest in strengthening primary care.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

36% of entities cited rising prescription drug costs as the primary barrier to affordability.

HEALTH PLANS

67%

Stressed the importance of policies and programs that ensure members receive the **right care, in the right place, at the right time.**

44%

Referenced their work to **streamline prior authorizations** and reduce administration burdens

PROVIDERS

70%

Called for regulatory and reimbursement reforms that enable innovative care models and support **team-based primary care**.

48%

Cited **capacity and workforce challenges** as barriers to providing high-quality affordable care.

PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURERS highlighted the need to lower out-of-pocket costs for patients through cost-sharing and rebate pass-through reforms.

PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS (PBMs) called for increased transparency throughout the pharmaceutical industry.

SIGNIFICANT EQUITY INVESTORS shared an interest in technology-enabled innovations that move care into the community, manage chronic conditions, and reduce administrative burdens.

MANAGEMENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION stressed that they provide support for providers to streamline their care.



PRIMARY CARE

- **70%** of providers selected strengthening primary care as **one of their top three priorities** among HCAWG's recommendations.
- **78%** of providers are **investing in team-based primary care models** that increase timely access to high-value care and improve care coordination.
- **44%** of health plans are making **investments and reforming payment policies** to support their members' access to primary and preventive care.



PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

- **100%** of PBMs and **90%** of pharmaceutical manufacturers selected reducing prescription drug costs among their **top two policy priorities.**
- **89%** of health plans consider prescription drug costs to be a **primary barrier to increasing health care affordability.**
- **50%** of PBMs and manufacturers called for **increased transparency across the pharmaceutical industry** to support policies to reduce prescription drug spending.
- **30%** of providers – including all community health centers – stressed the **importance of 340B discounts** in ensuring access to affordable prescription medications.



INNOVATION

- **55%** of health plans selected supporting innovative care delivery models as their **top priority** among HCAWG's recommendations and outlined their existing policies that pay for innovative care delivery.
- **35%** of providers have implemented innovative programs to **move care to lower-cost settings**, the community, and patients' homes



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **17** entities prioritized investments in the Commonwealth's **nursing educational pipeline and health care workforce.**
- **12** entities called for data interoperability, payment policies, and workforce reforms that streamline **transitions of care** across settings.
- **11** entities support the establishment of a **statewide data exchange** to advance the interoperability of data across payers and providers.
- **10** entities stressed the importance of utilizing **artificial intelligence** in the health care industry to reduce administrative burdens and called for regulation to ensure responsible utilization of the technology.
- **Seven** entities highlighted the need to reduce the utilization of potentially avoidable **low-value care.**

The full list of entities required to file testimony and their submissions are available on the HPC's website at MassHPC.gov/2026-CTH

OPENING REMARKS



THE HONORABLE ANDREA JOY CAMPBELL, ATTORNEY GENERAL

On January 18, 2023, Andrea Joy Campbell was sworn in to be the 45th Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, becoming the first woman of color to win statewide office in Massachusetts.

She, along with her incredible team, are committed to ensuring their work is responsive to the needs of residents and businesses. They pledge to build economic prosperity for all residents, prioritize the mental health and well-being of children, and break cycles of poverty, incarceration, and mediocrity while ensuring that people across the state have access to the AG's Office regardless of their zip code, language, or ability.

Andrea's journey to becoming the first Black woman elected Attorney General of Massachusetts didn't follow a traditional path. Born and raised in Roxbury and the South End neighborhoods of Boston, her mother passed away in a tragic car accident on her way to visit her father in prison when Andrea was only eight months old. While Andrea's grandmother did the best she could to raise Andrea and her siblings, she occasionally struggled with alcoholism. Andrea and her brothers would spend their early years moving between relatives and foster care until their father came home from prison, and she met him for the first time at eight years old.

Life wasn't easy. Her family was poor and relied on public housing and food assistance. Her father, who had worked hard to rebuild his life after prison, would not live to see Andrea graduate from college. He died suddenly when Andrea was 19 years old, a sophomore at Princeton University. Her twin brother Andre would later die at just 29 years old in the Department of Correction's custody due to receiving inadequate health care as a pre-trial detainee – a tragedy that fuels Andrea's fight for accountability and justice to this day.

Through all of this, Andrea persevered. Thanks to loving relatives, community support, and a network of teachers who encouraged her, she turned pain into purpose. After graduating from Boston Latin School, Andrea would go on to become the first in her family to graduate from college and law school, receiving her degrees from Princeton University and UCLA Law School.

After earning her law degree, she worked as a legal services attorney defending the rights of children and their families — particularly those with disabilities. Andrea also practiced law in the private sector and ultimately left to serve the public as General Counsel at the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, working across 101 cities and towns to address regional challenges like health care access, affordable housing, and climate change.

Andrea served as legal counsel to Governor Deval Patrick, working to improve our education and transportation systems and move forward an agenda of equity across the state.

Before becoming Attorney General, in 2015, Andrea successfully ran for the Boston City Council, becoming the first woman to represent District 4 on the Council. Her first piece of legislation was the Community Preservation Act, which still generates over $20 million annually for new affordable housing, historical preservation, and parks and open space. In 2018, she was unanimously elected City Council President – the first Black woman to hold that title.

RESEARCH PRESENTATION



DAVID SELTZ

Mr. David Seltz is the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission (HPC). Mr. Seltz leads the HPC's significant mission of health care policy reform, cost containment efforts, and market oversight by providing data-driven policy recommendations, overseeing innovative investment programs, and conducting research and analysis into the cost drivers and trends in health care. The HPC's goal is better health and better care – at a lower cost – for all residents across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Mr. Seltz was appointed in 2012 as the first leader of this new state government agency, directing the HPC through its establishment and into its current role as a nationally recognized leader in landmark health policy and health care reform efforts. To date, eight other states have established cost benchmarking programs with monitoring agencies modeled after the HPC, and several additional states are actively considering similar measures. Mr. Seltz continues to lend counsel and guidance to other states and countries crafting health policy reforms.

Since the HPC's establishment in 2012, health care cost growth in Massachusetts has been below U.S. averages almost every year, resulting in billions of dollars in savings for local businesses, families, and individuals. Additionally, the HPC has invested nearly $100 million in innovative care delivery models, aimed at addressing the medical, behavioral, and social needs of the state's most vulnerable and complex patients.

Prior to leading the HPC, Mr. Seltz was the Special Advisor on Health Care for Governor Deval Patrick and Senate President Therese Murray. Through these positions, Mr. Seltz advised the passage of historic health care access reform legislation in 2006, which served as the basis for the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Subsequently, he worked on landmark cost containment legislation in Massachusetts, which has also become a model of success for many states.

Mr. Seltz is a 2003 graduate of Boston College and originally from Minnesota. He was a recipient of Modern HealthCare's 2015 Up and Comer Award, which recognizes young executives that have made significant contributions in the areas of healthcare administration, management, or policy, as well as a recipient of the Massachusetts Health Council's 100th Anniversary Health Care Star Award (2020) in recognition of outstanding leadership toward improving and protecting health in Massachusetts. In 2020, Mr. Seltz supported the state's COVID-19 response and recovery efforts alongside other state and federal leaders.

Mr. Seltz also serves as Academy Chair of the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP), as a member of the Healey-Driscoll Administration's Health Care Affordability Working Group, as a designated member of the Oversight Council to the Massachusetts Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA), and was Co-Chair of the Primary Care Access, Delivery, and Payment Task Force.

PANEL 1

BEYOND THE NUMBERS: REAL WORLD PERSPECTIVES ON HEALTH CARE CHALLENGES



LESLIE DIAZ

Leslie Diaz is the Director of HelpLine and Public Programs at Health Care For All (HCFA), where she currently leads a multilingual team helping Massachusetts residents to access and maintain health care coverage. Previously, Leslie served as the director for My Ombudsman, a program serving MassHealth members as they navigated their health insurance benefits. Leslie has participated in health and racial equity focused leadership programs, including the Restuccia Health Justice Fellowship, which explores the intersection of racial equity and health justice, and the Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership (MICHL) program, which equips emerging leaders to address structural racism and advance health equity across organizations and communities. Leslie's work centers on elevating the experiences of consumers facing challenges with affordability, coverage, and other systemic barriers to care to inform advocacy efforts towards an equitable health care system.



MIMI GARDNER, MPH, MA

As Vice President and Chief of Community Partnerships and Health Impact, Mimi engages and partners with agencies and leaders in our communities and across the Commonwealth to develop and drive a health-informed community equity agenda. In this role, Mimi leverages NeighborHealth's position as a leading health care provider to facilitate collaboration among NeighborHealth and multiple health and human service agencies, ensuring the health center integrates community feedback into its strategic response to systemic and prevailing health equity gaps in our neighborhoods.

Mimi has worked with underserved and marginalized populations and fought for health equity, anti-racism practices, and social justice both as a provider and a person of color in the executive ranks. Mimi is a catalyst for social change with a career focusing on disrupting the cycle of trauma, transforming the healthcare system, and developing systems to promote racial healing and ensure an individual's right to opportunities for positive development. She is a licensed independent clinical social worker and active clinician. She holds a Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, a Master of Arts in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago Crown Family School of Social Work, and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Chicago.

PANEL 1

BEYOND THE NUMBERS: REAL WORLD PERSPECTIVES ON HEALTH CARE CHALLENGES



VICTORIA SELSER

Victoria Selser is an Epidemiologist with the City of Fitchburg Health Department and the Montachusett Public Health Network. Her public health career began during the early stages of the pandemic with the Community Tracing Collaborative, where she investigated COVID-19 cases and outbreaks across Massachusetts. In 2022, she transitioned to her current role within local public health. Much of her work focuses on the intersection of public health and medicine, translating community health data into programs that expand access to care and improve health outcomes. She led the development of Fitchburg's free care program, the North Central Free Medical Program, which provides free medical care and resource coordination to underserved populations. Victoria holds a bachelor's degree in microbiology from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.



JOSEPH SZCZECHOWICZ

Joe Szczechowicz is the Owner and President of SLS Outdoor Living and Landscape, a company he founded in 1975 in Lynn, Massachusetts. A native of Salem, Joe has spent more than five decades building his business. A graduate of Salem High School and Essex Agricultural & Technical Institute, Joe holds a Massachusetts Commercial Certified Pesticide License, is a Massachusetts Certified Landscape Professional (MCLP), and remains committed to staying current on industry regulations, innovative practices, and environmentally responsible products. He the Current Past President of the Massachusetts Association of Lawn Care Professionals (MALCP), is a board member of the Green Industry Alliance (GIA), and serves on the Board of Directors for the North Shore Chamber of Commerce. His work reflects a longstanding commitment to the landscape industry, environmental stewardship, and the next generation of professionals.



MICHAEL WILSON, PharmD

Mike Wilson is a pharmacist at Crawford Drug, a family-owned community pharmacy that has been serving the Dorchester neighborhood since the early 1900s. After graduating from Massachusetts College of Pharmacy in Boston in 2010, Mike spent four years working as a pharmacist and pharmacy manager at a large chain pharmacy before returning to the family business in 2014. With more than a decade of experience at Crawford Drug, Mike represents the third generation of pharmacists in his family to serve the community. Since the family acquired the pharmacy in 1975, Crawford Drug has remained committed to employing local residents and providing personalized, neighborhood-based care. Mike and his family continue to build on that legacy while modernizing the pharmacy through investments in technology and updated systems, ensuring patients receive accessible, efficient, and welcoming service. His work reflects a deep commitment to community pharmacy, family tradition, and helping patients navigate their health care needs.

PANEL 2

A SUSTAINABLE SAFETY NET: FOCUS ON ACCESS, COVERAGE, AND EQUITY



PETER D. BANKO

Peter is leading Baystate Health through an exciting new era of healthy growth – in business and in community. As President and CEO, he is uprooting stagnant thinking by leading transformation with both passion and purpose. He teaches, supports, and lifts up those around him, helping them each define and more fully live their missions to impact the world. This has created a connected ecosystem of 13,000 caregivers, who individually and together are now on a mission to redefine health and health care.

Peter has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Notre Dame and a master's degree in health administration from Cornell University. He and his wife, Elizabeth, have been married for 31 years and have four children. The entire family has a strong commitment to promoting human dignity, the common good, and solidarity with the marginalized through community service, philanthropy, and governance.



ALASTAIR BELL, MD, MBA

Alastair Bell, MD, oversees the comprehensive system strategy and operations of BMCHS' entities, including BMC, Boston Accountable Care Organization, Clearway Health, and the WellSense Health Plan.

Prior to joining in 2012, Dr. Bell was a leader in the North American payor and provider practice at McKinsey and Company, advising a range of national and international healthcare organizations and leading large-scale transformation programs. He received his Doctor of Medicine from the University of Oxford, his Master of Arts in physiology from the University of Cambridge, and his Master of Business Administration with distinction from Harvard Business School. Dr. Bell currently serves as co-chair of the board for the Boston Children's Chorus.

PANEL 2

A SUSTAINABLE SAFETY NET: FOCUS ON ACCESS, COVERAGE, AND EQUITY



BRENDA RODRIGUEZ, MBA

Brenda Rodriguez is the Chief Executive Officer of Lynn Community Health Center, a federally qualified health center serving more than 46,000 patients annually across over 30 locations. She brings a distinctive blend of financial expertise, strategic leadership, and lived experience to advancing accessible, affordable, and high-quality health care.

Since becoming CEO in 2024, Brenda has led organizational transformation focused on strengthening financial sustainability, expanding access to comprehensive care, advancing clinical innovation, and building a high-performing, mission-driven workforce. Her leadership emphasizes integrated, community-based models that improve health outcomes, address disparities, and create long-term value.

A three-time Chief Financial Officer, Brenda has held executive leadership roles across health care, education, and media, including serving as Chief Strategy and Financial Officer at Lowell Community Health Center. She began her career at PricewaterhouseCoopers, building a foundation in financial management, organizational strategy, and operational performance.

As a lifelong community health center patient, Brenda brings a personal understanding of the importance of accessible, culturally responsive, and comprehensive care. Her leadership is grounded in the belief that financial sustainability and health equity are mutually reinforcing priorities.

Brenda holds an MBA from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Boston University.



RYAN SCHWARZ, MD, MBA

Ryan Schwarz is a physician, and the Medicaid Director and Assistant Secretary for MassHealth, Massachusetts's Medicaid and CHIP program. In this role, Ryan oversees the state's $23 billion health insurance program, serving ~2 million Massachusetts residents.

Ryan previously served in multiple leadership roles for MassHealth and as the clinical lead for the Massachusetts COVID-19 Response Command Center in which he helped lead the state's efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to his time with Massachusetts state government, Ryan worked with governments and health systems globally as a technical adviser to the World Bank. Ryan also co-founded Nepal's first public-private partnership healthcare delivery organization, and co-founded The Community Health Impact Coalition, which works with governments in over 40 countries to enhance implementation of community health worker programs.

Ryan is a practicing internal medicine and pediatrics physician at a health center in the Boston area. He completed his MD and MBA at Yale, and his clinical training at Harvard Medical School.

PANEL 3

THE RIGHT CARE IN THE RIGHT PLACE: INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR BETTER OUTCOMES AND LOWER COSTS

RIGHT CARE, RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE



SUSAN COAKLEY

Susan Coakley is chief executive officer of Aspire Health and Community Services, one of the Commonwealth's designated Community Behavioral Health Centers (CBHCs). Aspire provides a broad range of community-based behavioral health services, including 24/7/365 crisis support, to people of all ages across the South Shore. The Aspire team is comprised of more than 500 employees who work at Aspire's clinics in Quincy and Marshfield or in the community, serving more than 130,000 client encounters annually.

Prior to her work at Aspire, Ms. Coakley was the Chief Commercial Officer at City Block Health, where she led the organization's growth in key markets including Massachusetts, Florida, and Ohio. She was interim President of Beacon Health Options (now known as Carelon) following its acquisition by Elevance Health. Ms. Coakley was previously the President of Boston Medical Center HealthNet Plan (now known as Well Sense), which is a member of the Boston Medical Center Health System.

A health care lawyer by training, Ms. Coakley has deep expertise in health care policy and health care reimbursement. She is a member of the board of directors of the Massachusetts Association for Behavioral Healthcare. She is a graduate of Connecticut College (B.A.), Yale School of Public Health (M.P.H.), and Northeastern University School of Law (J.D.).



WILLIAM W. TOLLEFSEN, MD, MSc, MBA, FAEMS

William Tollefsen, MD, MSc, MBA, FAEMS, is the Chair of Emergency Medicine, Medical Director: Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Medical Director: Mobile Integrated Health for South Shore Health. Dual-boarded in Emergency Medicine and EMS Medicine, Dr. Tollefsen works clinically as an Emergency Physician at South Shore Health in addition to his role as EMS Medical Director.

One of few physicians in the country to receive the prestigious "FAEMS" recognition, Dr. Tollefsen is also the Medical Director for OEMS Region IV, serving 61 cities and towns of the Metro-Boston EMS Council. As the current EMS Medical Director for eight municipal and three private ambulance services on the South Shore, Dr. Tollefsen interacts and provides oversight for over 400 Paramedics.

Dr. Tollefsen graduated from New York Medical College and completed residency training in Emergency Medicine at Harvard University, Brigham and Women's, and Massachusetts General Hospital. He completed a fellowship in Emergency Medical Services and Critical Care Transport at the University of Massachusetts, where he worked as an Emergency Physician and Flight Physician for UMASS LifeFlight. He completed an MBA at the Isenberg School of Management at UMASS Amherst, and holds a Master of Medical Science degree from the Boston University School of Medicine.

PANEL 3

THE RIGHT CARE IN THE RIGHT PLACE: INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR BETTER OUTCOMES AND LOWER COSTS

HPC PATHWAYS INVESTMENT PROGRAM



LISA FELCI JIMENEZ, MSN, RN, LSW

Lisa Felci Jimenez is the Clinical Services Director at Mystic Valley Aging Services, where she draws on more than two decades of experience supporting older adults and individuals with disabilities through community-based care. Since joining MVAS as a Care Manager in 2004, she has continued to grow within the organization and deepened her expertise across the home care continuum. Lisa earned a Bachelor of Science in Health and Human Services from Suffolk University, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Regis College, and a Master of Science in Nursing Education from Worcester State University. Her commitment to lifelong learning and public health education includes a particular interest in promoting effective hand hygiene practices.



CHRIS MAURO, LICSW, CCM

Since earning his Master of Social Work (MSW) in 2005, Chris has dedicated his career to helping individuals and families navigate complex healthcare and social challenges. A passion for complex care emerged early in his professional journey and continues to guide his work today. Over the past twenty years, he has held practice and leadership roles in residential services, home health, community care management, accountable care organizations, and inpatient social work and case management departments. Across every role, Chris has found the greatest meaning in educating, empowering, and connecting vulnerable populations with the services and supports they need to thrive. No matter the setting, he remains proud to be a helper and advocate for others.

PANEL 4

RESPONDING TO HEALTH CARE COST GROWTH: TRENDS, TRADEOFFS, AND POLICY SOLUTIONS



NIYUM GANDHI

Niyum Gandhi is Mass General Brigham's Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer. His responsibilities include financial oversight for Mass General Brigham's clinical and academic operations and management within the areas of strategy, corporate finance, treasury, managed care, network development, real estate, and supply chain, as well as operational oversight of Mass General Brigham Health Plan and Mass General Brigham Diversified Businesses.

Prior to joining Mass General Brigham and returning to Boston in 2021, Niyum served on the executive team at Mount Sinai Health System in New York. He joined the organization as its first Chief Population Health Officer in 2015. In that role, he built Mount Sinai's clinically integrated network, direct-to-employer business unit and consumer digital function. He later took on the role of Chief Financial Officer for the health system, overseeing the financial operations of Mount Sinai's eight hospitals and the Icahn School of Medicine.

Before his tenure at Mount Sinai, Niyum was a Partner in the Health and Life Sciences consulting practice of Oliver Wyman, a global management consulting firm, where he focused on financial planning, value-based health care, and transformation strategies for hospitals, physician groups, and health plans.

Throughout his career, Niyum has collaborated closely with a variety of health care providers and payers to help design and implement value-based clinical models, develop new contracting and integrated product distribution strategies, align funds flow and physician incentives, and establish the appropriate infrastructure to support value-based health care.

Niyum holds an A.B. in economics from Harvard University.



PATRICK GILLIGAN

Patrick Gilligan is Chief Executive Officer of Point32Health. Prior to Point32Health, Patrick was a senior advisor with CWH Advisors and previously served as Chief Commercial Officer and Executive Vice President at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA).

Patrick holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from the College of the Holy Cross and is a former Associate of the Society of Actuaries. He currently serves on the Board of United Way of Massachusetts Bay and has held governance roles with Blue Venture Fund, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, and Cobalt Benefits Group.

Patrick, a New England native, holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from the College of the Holy Cross and is a former Associate of the Society of Actuaries. He currently serves on the Board of United Way of Massachusetts Bay and has held governance roles with Blue Venture Fund, Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, and Cobalt Benefits Group.

PANEL 4

RESPONDING TO HEALTH CARE COST GROWTH: TRENDS, TRADEOFFS, AND POLICY SOLUTIONS



JOSEPH M. SHIELDS, Esq.

Joseph M. Shields, Esq. is the Founder and President of Transparency Rising, a national nonprofit 501(c)(6) organization serving as a catalyst for pharmacy-benefit transformation and advancing competition, innovation, and trust across the nation's health care and pharmaceutical supply chains.

Joe previously served three Governors in New York and New Jersey as a senior executive and trusted counsel. He earned his law degree from Temple University's Beasley School of Law and graduated cum laude from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.



MICHAEL VALENTA

Michael currently serves as Chief Customer Officer for the Strategic Customer Group (SCG) for Johnson and Johnson Innovative Medicine, where he is accountable for delivering comprehensive patient access to the Innovative Medicine portfolio.

Prior to joining Johnson & Johnson, Mike served as a policy liaison for Merck's U.S. Market organization in Washington, D.C. Earlier in his career, he held the role of Associate Vice President, U.S. Oncology at Merck, along with multiple leadership positions at Bristol Myers Squibb. Mike holds an MBA from Saint Joseph's University and a BS from La Salle University, both in Philadelphia.



MATTHEW VENO

Matthew serves as Executive Director of the Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission (GIC), a quasi-independent state agency.

Before joining the GIC in 2020, Matt was First Deputy Commissioner at the Division of Insurance (DOI). From 2009-2018, Matt represented Harvard Pilgrim Health Care before federal and state regulatory and administrative bodies, as well as the U.S. Congress. Earlier in his career, Matt served three terms on the Salem City Council, a decade in early childhood education policy and advocacy, and spent a year of service in the Bronx, NY as a member of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

Matt holds a BA in political science from the College of the Holy Cross, and an MBA in Health Care Management from Boston University Graduate School of Business (now the Questrom School of Business).

PANEL 5

A CALL TO ACTION: A LEADERSHIP AGENDA FOR HEALTH CARE AFFORDABILITY



SARAH ISELIN

Sarah Iselin is president and chief executive officer of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, a community-focused, taxpaying, not-for-profit health plan that has been headquartered in Boston for nearly 90 years.

Sarah has nearly 30 years of experience in private and public sector healthcare strategy, policy, finance and operations. Prior to taking the leadership role at BCBSMA, she served as executive vice president and chief operating officer at Blue Shield of California. She previously held senior leadership positions at Florida Blue and Optum. In Massachusetts, she served as commissioner of the Division of Health Care Finance and Policy in the Patrick administration. Sarah served Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts earlier in her career as well. She was president for three years of BCBSMA's foundation and later served as the company's chief strategy officer and senior vice president of strategy, policy, and community partnerships.

Sarah served on Gov. Healey's Health Care Affordability Working Group. She sits on the boards of the National Institute for Health Care Management, the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, and Solis Mammography. She also serves on Boston's Green Ribbon Commission.



AUDREY MORSE GASTEIER

Audrey Morse Gasteier serves as the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Health Connector, the Commonwealth's official Affordable Care Act (ACA) health insurance Marketplace. The Health Connector provides health and dental coverage to approximately 350,000 Massachusetts residents and promotes enrollment in comprehensive health coverage to the Massachusetts public in accordance with its responsibilities under state and federal health reform laws.

Prior to her appointment as Executive Director in March 2023, Gasteier served as the Health Connector's Deputy Executive Director and Chief of Policy and Strategy, leading strategy and operations, program and health insurance product design, policy research, government affairs, and outreach and communication efforts aimed at engagement with members and the public. Gasteier is also an instructor at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Prior to joining the Health Connector in 2012, she served as Director of Health Systems Policy at the Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy, where she led health coverage research initiatives and implementation of employer-related elements of state health reform. Gasteier also served as a Policy Analyst at the Association of Community Human Service Agencies in Los Angeles, California. She holds an MS in Health Policy and Management from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and a BA from Mount Holyoke College.

PANEL 5

A CALL TO ACTION: A LEADERSHIP AGENDA FOR HEALTH CARE AFFORDABILITY



DIANA RICHARDSON

Diana Richardson is President and CEO of Merrimack Health, a regional, safety-net health care system serving the eastern Merrimack Valley. An accomplished health care leader, she is recognized for her leadership of both academic medical centers and community-based health care organizations. Following Lawrence General Hospital's acquisition of the former Holy Family Hospitals in Methuen and Haverhill, MA, from Steward Health Care, she assumed leadership of the newly formed Merrimack Health, overseeing the development of its new systemwide brand and integration strategy. She has a strong track record of improving operations and financial performance while strengthening the quality of care. In her current role, she is guiding Merrimack Health through a significant period of transformation, with a focus on financial stability, system integration and long-term growth.

Prior to joining Merrimack Health, Diana served as Senior Transition Liaison with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, where she played a key role in the state's incident command response to Steward Health Care's bankruptcy. Previously, Diana served as President of Tufts Medical Center, having earlier held the roles of Senior Vice President and COO, and Executive Vice President of Tufts Medicine. She also served as Vice President of Operations at UF Health – Shands Hospital in Gainesville, Florida.



CHRISTINA SEVERIN

Christina Severin, President and CEO of Community Care Cooperative, is a leading health care executive with more than 30 years of experience and numerous accomplishments in managed care, delivery systems, health insurance, Accountable Care Organizations, Management Services, public policy, and public health. She has led Community Care Cooperative (C3) since the organization's launch in 2016, leveraging the proven best practices of ACOs throughout the country, building the organization on the collective strengths of its health centers, and growing the organization into a diversified portfolio of companies designed to advance the interests of FQHCs throughout the country.

Widely recognized for her achievements, she has been honored for her leadership of a Top 100 Women-Led Business by the Boston Globe every year since 2018, Christina's prior leadership experience includes serving as President and Chief Executive Officer of Beth Israel Deaconess Care Organization and as President of Network Health, a nonprofit Massachusetts health plan.

Christina has taught classes in health care administration and management at Boston University, Harvard University, and Northeastern University. She earned a Master of Public Health with a concentration in Health Services from Boston University School of Public Health, and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Economy from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

HPC BOARD MEMBERS



DEBORAH DEVAUX, CHAIR

Expertise in health care administration, finance, and management at a senior level

Deborah Devaux was appointed to chair the HPC's Board of Commissioners in July 2022, following 40 years of health care management experience with health insurers and providers in Massachusetts. Most recently, she served as the Executive Vice President and Chief Population Health Officer at Beth Israel Lahey Health.



MARTIN COHEN, VICE CHAIR

Expertise in behavioral health, substance use disorder, and mental health services and mental health reimbursement systems

Martin D. Cohen recently retired as the President and CEO of the MetroWest Health Foundation. He has more than 30 years of experience working to plan and implement comprehensive strategies to improve public mental health services. He was first appointed to the HPC Board in 2015 and confirmed as Vice Chair in September 2019.



ASHLEY BLACKBURN

Demonstrated expertise in health care consumer advocacy.

Ashley Blackburn is Deputy Executive Director of Health Care For All (HCFA). Before joining HCFA, she served as Policy Manager at Community Catalyst, worked at the Ohio Legislative Service Commission as the primary Staff Attorney for the Insurance Committee of the Ohio House of Representatives, and was an appointed Consumer Representative to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. She was appointed to the HPC Board in 2026.



COMMISSIONER MICHAEL CALJOUW

Commissioner of the Division of Insurance, Ex-Officio

Michael T. Caljouw is the Commissioner of Insurance for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, appointed by Governor Healey in October 2024. Prior to this role, he directed Blue Cross Blue Shiels of Massachusetts' regulatory and policy portfolio. He previously spent a decade in leadership positions at the Division of Insurance and Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation.



SANDRA COTTERELL

A registered nurse with expertise in the delivery of care and development and utilization of innovative treatments in the practice of patient care Appointed by the Governor

Sandra Cotterell retired as CEO in 2024 after nearly 30 years at Codman Square Health Center. A lifelong Boston resident, she started her career as a cardiothoracic nurse. She joined Codman as the chief operations officer in 1994 and stepped into the CEO role in 2011. She was appointed to the HPC Board in 2025.



KEITH MARZILLI ERICSON, PHD

A health economist

Keith M. Marzilli Ericson is a Professor of Markets, Public Policy, and Law at Boston University's Questrom School of Business. He is also a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research and Co-Editor of the Journal of Public Economics. His research explores the organization and financing of health care markets. He was appointed to the HPC Board in 2025.



UMESH KURPAD

Expertise in health plan administration and finance

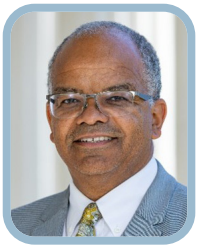
Umesh Kurpad served as the Chief Financial Officer of Point32Health. Prior to this role, he guided Tufts Health Plan through a period where it doubled in size while maintaining its financial strength. He is skilled at organizational transformation and passionate about technology enabled services. He was appointed to the HPC Board in 2025.



CHRISTOPHER LEIBMAN

Expertise in health care innovation, including pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, or medical devices

Chris Leibman is Senior Vice President, Chief Access Head at Biogen. Prior to this role, he lived in Zug, Switzerland, where he led market access and pricing at Biogen for Europe and Canada. He joined Biogen in 2014 from Janssen Pharmaceutical (J&J), where he served as head of Market Access and Policy for the Neuroscience franchise. He was appointed to the HPC Board in 2025.



SECRETARY KIAME MAHANIAH, MD

Secretary of Health and Human Services, Ex-Officio

Dr. Kiame Mahaniah was appointed Secretary of Health and Human Services in July 2025, after serving as Undersecretary of Health for EOHHS since April 2023. He is a practicing physician in the field of addition and primary care and previously served as CEO of Lynn Community Health Center. He is the co-chair of the Primary Care Access, Delivery, and Payment Task Force.



STEVEN WALSH

Expertise in representing hospitals or hospital health systems

Steve Walsh has served as President and CEO of the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association since November 2017. He previously served as the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council of Community Hospitals and served six terms in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He was appointed to the HPC Board in 2025.



JAMES WILLMUTH

Expertise in representing the health care workforce as a leader of a labor organization

Jamie Willmuth is the Senior Policy Analyst for the Massachusetts Division of 1199 SEIU, the largest health care union in the nation. Since January 2008, he has led on policy creation and development of the union's legislative agenda related to health care reform, provider reimbursement, and other areas of importance to 1199SEIU membership. He was first appointed to the HPC Board in 2025.

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HEARING MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE AT MASSHPC.GOV

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