

## Measuring Climate Resiliency: A Virtual Roundtable Discussion

February 1 – 2, 2023  
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. EST

### BIOSKETCHES

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#### Michelle Dardis, M.S.N., M.B.A., P.M.P.



Ms. Dardis is the Director of the Department of Quality Measurement at The Joint Commission. In this role, she directs activities related to the development, testing, implementation, and maintenance of quality measures as well as the management of performance measurement systems. She is an informatics nurse specializing in clinical quality measurement and data analytics. She has more than 15 years of clinical, research, and education experience. Before her role at The Joint Commission, Ms. Dardis was a senior clinical program lead at Mathematica. In this role, she supported the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), serving as a health IT standard expert for the adoption of digital measures. She also oversaw a CMS contract to develop and maintain chart-abstracted, claims-based, and electronic measures for use in CMS programs. In addition, she previously oversaw quality improvement initiatives and held hospital-based roles leading EHR education and implementation at the American Hospital Association.

Ms. Dardis received her Master of Business Administration and Master of Science in Nursing from Loyola University Chicago. In addition, she is a certified Project Management Professional.

#### Robin Guenther, F.A.I.A., LEED Fellow



Ms. Robin Guenther FAIA, LEED Fellow, is Principal of Perkins&Will and Senior Advisor to the global non-profit Health Care Without Harm. Robin works at the intersection of health care architecture, health, and sustainable policy and participates in a wide range of advocacy initiatives while continuing to practice.

She is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Leader and the author of *Sustainable Healthcare Architecture*. She developed the Green Guide for Health Care and LEED for Healthcare. In 2014, she coauthored the Sustainable and Climate Resilient Hospital Facility Toolkit for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In 2012, Fast Company included her as one of the “100 most creative people in business.” She was a TEDMED 2014 speaker. Currently, she chairs the board of the Health Product Declaration Collaborative and serves on the New York City Local Law 97 Hospitals Committee.

**Rachel E. Lookadoo, J.D.**



Ms. Lookadoo is an assistant Professor in the epidemiology department of the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and serves as Deputy Director of the Center for Biosecurity, Biopreparedness, and Emerging Infectious Diseases. She also acts as the Director of Public Health Policy for the Water, Climate, and Health program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Ms. Lookadoo is an attorney, and she focuses on the various legal and regulatory issues that can arise in emergency preparedness and response. She specializes in healthcare surge events, isolation/quarantine law, public health impacts of climate change, crisis standards of care, infectious disease response, and general legal preparedness. Ms. Lookadoo also conducts emergency preparedness trainings and assessments for public health departments and healthcare facilities nationally. She received her Juris Doctor degree from American University Washington College of Law and her bachelor's degree from Baylor University.

**Kelly R. McKinney, M.P.A.**



Mr. McKinney is Assistant Vice President, Emergency Management and Enterprise Resilience at NYU Langone Health in New York City. The former Deputy Commissioner at the New York City Office of Emergency Management and Chief Disaster Officer at the American Red Cross in Greater New York, he is the author of *Moment of Truth: The Nature of Catastrophes and How to Prepare for Them*, published by Post Hill Press.

**Kalpana Ramiah, Dr.P.H., M.Sc.**



Dr. Ramiah joined America's Essential Hospitals in 2015 to lead the research and analytics portfolio of Essential Hospitals Institute, the association's quality and research arm. She has a well-established career in public health and health services research that spans two decades. Dr. Ramiah has extensive experience conducting research and managing federally and privately funded technical assistance projects and research programs. She is highly skilled in population health, patient and family engagement, and measures and materials development.

Before joining America's Essential Hospitals, Dr. Ramiah was a principal researcher at the American Institutes for Research and an assistant research professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management at the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services. She managed several major projects, with responsibility for ensuring quality and consistency of data collection, supervising staff, and developing strong client relationships. Before her academic research work, Dr. Ramiah held leadership roles with the Association of Schools of Public Health and Programs of Public Health and the West Virginia Smoking Cessation and Reduction in Pregnancy Treatment Dissemination Initiative, serving as a manager and deputy director, respectively.

## Sohel Saikat, Ph.D.



Dr. Saikat is an expert in health systems and services resilience employing a public health approach. He has 20 years of experience in health protection and health policy and planning, including service continuity, and health systems strengthening. Within the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters, he is responsible for the health systems resilience and essential public health functions portfolio and has participated in multiple Joint External Evaluations (Pakistan, Liberia, Eritrea, Maldives, Saudi Arabia) and post-JEE national planning for health security (Tanzania, Eritrea, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal). He served as the WHO HQ's health systems technical lead for the Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee mission to Pakistan and as the Health Systems and Response Connector with Vaccine Delivery Partnership Mission to Ethiopia for COVID vaccination; he also participated in the Universal Health and Preparedness Review mission to Thailand. In the context of COVID-19, he has been assigned to coordinate WHO's position for country support in health systems recovery to achieve universal health coverage and health security as interdependent objectives.

## Renee Salas, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.



Dr. Renee N. Salas served as the lead author of the *Lancet's* "Countdown on Health and Climate Change: Policy Brief for the U.S." from 2018 to 2021, moving to senior author in 2022, and she founded and leads its working group of more than 80 U.S. organizations. She was a co-director for the first Climate Crisis and Clinical Practice Symposium, in partnership with *the New England Journal of Medicine*, and spearheads the broader initiative. Dr. Salas is also a guest editor for *the New England Journal of Medicine* Group Series entitled "Fossil-Fuel Pollution and Climate Change." Dr. Salas was elected to the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) in 2021 for her work on climate change and health and continues to serve on NAM's Grand Challenge on Health and Climate Change. She engages in research on how climate change is impacting the healthcare system. She has testified before Congress, frequently speaks at high-level engagements across diverse sectors, advises and publishes in high-impact journals, and her work and expertise are regularly featured in mainstream media outlets such as the New York Times, NPR, USA Today, and the Associated Press. Dr. Salas is Affiliated Faculty and previous Burke Fellow at the Harvard Global Health Institute and a Yerby fellow at the Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. She is a practicing emergency medicine physician at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School and affiliated faculty at Harvard Medical School's Department of Global Health and Social Medicine.

**Elizabeth Schenk, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N.**



Dr. Schenk serves as the Executive Director of Environmental Stewardship for Providence, one of the nation's largest non-profit health systems. Dr. Schenk is helping lead Providence's commitment to decarbonization through strategy and innovation, conservation of resources, by improving efficiency of practices and processes, and through education and research. She is an assistant research professor at Washington State University College of Nursing and led the development of Climate, Health, and Nursing Tool (CHANT), measuring health professionals' awareness and engagement with climate change and health. CHANT has been translated to several languages and is used in more than 30 nations. She developed the WE ACT Framework (Waste, Energy/Water, Agriculture/food, Chemicals, Transportation) to organize the extensive range of environmental stewardship, while motivating action.

**Walt Vernon, P.E., LEED AP, E.D.A.C., F.A.S.H.E.**



Mr. Vernon is the Chief Executive Officer of Mazzetti, an employee-owned Benefit Corporation focused on Bending the Climate Curve. Mazzetti is a consulting firm, helping healthcare clients and organizations to plan, design, construct, operate, and improve future-focused facilities. As a leading global provider of MEP engineering design and technology consulting primarily focused on healthcare, Mazzetti creates future-focused, technologically advanced buildings, rooted in local culture, climate, and economy.

Mr. Vernon has been partnering, consulting, and advising healthcare clients for more than 30 years, with a keen focus on future-planning. He serves on and leads various U.S. and international code committees. He regularly presents and publishes on various topics addressing healthcare's greatest challenges in the built environment.

## **Federal Participants**

### **John M. Balbus, M.D., M.P.H. (Moderator)**



Dr. Balbus is the Interim Director of the new Office of Climate Change and Health Equity within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and is a physician and public health professional with more than 25 years of experience working on the health implications of climate change. Dr. Balbus has served as HHS Principal to the U.S. Global Change Research Program and as co-chair of the Working Group on Climate Change and Human Health for the U.S. Global Change Research Program. Before coming to OASH, Dr. Balbus served as Senior Advisor for Public Health to the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).

Before joining NIEHS, Dr. Balbus was Chief Health Scientist at the Environmental Defense Fund and an associate professor of environmental and occupational health at the George Washington School of Public Health and Health Services. He received his Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, his Doctor of Medicine from the University of Pennsylvania, and his undergraduate degree in biochemistry from Harvard University.

### **David Meyers, M.D., FAAFP**



Dr. Meyers, a family physician, helps lead the Agency's mission of producing evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable. This includes working within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and with other Federal, State, and local partners to make sure that the evidence is understood and used.

Dr. Meyers joined AHRQ in 2004 and has served under four AHRQ directors. Appointed Deputy Director in February 2020, he has led many of AHRQ's strategic planning activities and co-led the development of AHRQ's

National Nursing Home COVID-19 Action Network. Dr. Meyers served as AHRQ's Acting Director from January 2021 to February 2022.

Prior to his appointment as Deputy Director, he served as AHRQ's first chief physician and directed EvidenceNOW, AHRQ's \$110 million initiative to help primary care practices improve the heart health of their patients through quality improvement support and the implementation of new evidence. During his more than 15 years with AHRQ, Dr. Meyers has directed the Agency's Center for Primary Care, Prevention and Clinical Partnerships and established its Center for Evidence and Practice Improvement. He has also directed the Agency's Practice-Based Research Network initiatives and served as the Acting Scientific Director for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.

Dr. Meyers' recent publications focus on the primary care workforce, supporting quality improvement in primary care practice, utilization of clinical preventive services, and trust in the physician-patient relationship.

Before joining AHRQ in 2004, he practiced family medicine, including maternity care, in a community health center in southeast Washington, D.C., and directed the Georgetown University Department of Family Medicine's practice-based research network, CAPRICORN. He

is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and completed his family medicine residency at Providence Hospital/Georgetown University. After residency, he completed fellowship training in primary care health policy and research in the Department of Family Medicine at Georgetown University. In 2019, he was elected a member of the National Academy of Medicine.

**Robert Otto Valdez, Ph.D., M.H.S.A.**



Dr. Valdez was appointed Director of AHRQ in February 2022. He was previously the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Professor Emeritus of Family & Community Medicine and Economics at the University of New Mexico (UNM). He received his Ph.D. from the Pardee RAND Graduate School for Public Policy Studies specializing in studies of healthcare financing and quality of medical care. At the University of Michigan School of Public Health, he was awarded a master's degree in health policy & administration. At Harvard University, Dr. Valdez studied in the Department of History and Science specializing in Latin American

history and in biochemistry.

In 2008, Dr. Valdez was the Founding Executive Director of the RWJF Center for Health Policy at UNM. He previously served as founding Dean at the Drexel University School of Public Health. From 1985 through 1999, he was Professor of Health Services at the UCLA School of Public Health and directed the health services doctoral studies program and the MBA/MPH program in collaboration with the UCLA Anderson School of Business. He also served as Associate Director of the Chicano Studies Research Center.

Dr. Valdez started his career as the lead child health researcher for the historic RAND Health Insurance Experiment. Internationally recognized as an expert in health services research, the U.S. healthcare system, and health policy analysis, he has led numerous global healthcare initiatives with the Pan American Health Organization and the University of California. His health promotion and disease prevention work with Univision Communications Corporation, “Salud es Vida: ¡Enterate!,” was recognized with journalism’s prestigious Peabody Award.

From 1993 through 1997, Dr. Valdez served at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Public Health Service) and at the same time as Director of Interagency Health Policy (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services).

Prior to joining HHS in 1993, he served as a special senior advisor to the White House on healthcare reform. In 1998, he served as Special Senior Advisor to the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. His public service includes serving as Chairman of the New Mexico Community Foundation, Chairman of the American Hospital Association Foster G. McGaw Prize Committee, and Chairman of the Public Health Institute, one of the nation’s largest non-profit public health agencies serving communities across California and internationally.