



Consensus Standards Approval Committee (CSAC)

Committee Chairs

Melissa Danforth (Chair)

Vice President of Hospital Ratings, The Leapfrog Group
Washington, DC

Melissa Danforth (Chair) is the Vice President of Hospital Ratings at The Leapfrog Group, a Washington, DC based not-for-profit organization representing the nation's largest employers and purchasers of health benefits working to make great leaps forward in the safety, quality, and value of healthcare. Ms. Danforth serves as member of Leapfrog's senior leadership team informing Leapfrog's strategic direction, engaging experts and stakeholders, and analyzing program results to engage purchasers and consumers and drive safety and quality improvements. Ms. Danforth manages Leapfrog's various measurement and public reporting activities including the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, the Hospital Safety Score, and emerging ratings programs.

John Bulger, DO, MBA (Vice-Chair)

Chief Medical Officer, Geisinger Health Plan
Danville, PA

John Bulger, DO, (Vice-Chair) is the chief medical officer of Geisinger Health Plan located in Danville, Pennsylvania. He has been with the Geisinger Health System since completing his internal medicine residency at PCOM in 1998. He has led clinical, operational and education programs at Geisinger. These include director of hospital medicine, program director of the osteopathic internal medicine residency, associate chief academic officer and chief quality officer. Dr. Bulger is a recognized leader in quality and patient safety and serves on regional and national groups aimed at improving the quality of medical care.

Committee Members

Dan Culica, MD, MA, PhD

Senior Program Specialist, Texas Health and Human Services Commissions
Austin, TX

Dan Culica, MD, has extensive expertise in medical care organization with consistent contributions to health care transformation through delivery system and payment reform. He has been involved in performance improvement projects and design of outcome measures for healthcare interventions. Dr. Culica is also immersed in the study of unwarranted variation in health, health care, utilization and costs state, nation and worldwide. He is genuinely dedicated to measurement science applicable to quality of care. Dr. Culica is also involved in population health, specifically urban community health. Half of his career has been spent in academic institutions as faculty and clinical environments as a surgeon. Dr. Culica has published more than 30 peer-reviewed articles and made over 30 presentations.

Dana Cyra, MA, CPHQ

Executive Director of Quality Improvement, Includa
Stevens Point, WI

Dana Cyra, MA, is the mother and caregiver of a 36-year-old woman with an intellectual disability who has been living successfully in a small home with one roommate for more than two years. Her daughter previously lived in multiple settings, including state institutions. Ms. Cyra is the Executive Director of Quality Improvement for Includa, an MCO providing Long Term Services and Supports in Wisconsin. Ms. Cyra is an active participant in a statewide Quality Workgroup, comprised of representatives from all Wisconsin LTSS MCOs. Ms. Cyra gained experience in research/measurement through previous work at the University of North Dakota and Federal Bureau of Prisons. She also has 25+ years of experience in long term care. Ms. Cyra is highly motivated to ensure there are meaningful measures of outcomes with the patient's best interest in mind.

Lisa Freeman

Executive Director, Connecticut Center for Patient Safety
Fairfield, CT

Lisa Freeman is the Executive Director of the Connecticut Center for Patient Safety, where she represents the patient voice, ensuring that the patient perspective is part of all health care conversations in her work with all stakeholders to improve the safety and quality of healthcare. She is an active member in a number of organizations including NQF, the Connecticut Board of Nursing, the New England QIN-QIO Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) and several other PFACs, as well as belonging to a number of state and national patient advocacy organizations. She contributes to work on advanced illness care and shared decision making, and is particularly interested in patient and provider education, patient engagement and person-centered care. Her work focuses on raising current awareness about patient safety issues, patient engagement and the need for transparency.

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, MS, FACS

Board Chairman, Health Watch USASM
Somerset, KY

Kevin Kavanagh, MD, is currently Board Chairman of Health Watch USASM, a Kentucky based patient advocacy and research organization. Health Watch USASM is a member of the National Quality Forum and has been designated as a "Community Leader" for Value-Driven Healthcare by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Kavanagh is an Associate Editor for the Journal of Patient Safety. On Aug. 20, 2014 Dr. Kavanagh became a CDC & ATSDR Honor Award Nominee. He has served on the 2014, 2015, 2017 and 2018 Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services' Hospital-Acquired Condition (HAC) Reduction Program Technical Expert Panel (TEP) along with the AHRQ Standing Working Group for Quality Indicators for 2016 to 2017. He also service on the AHRQ for Health Care Effectiveness and Outcomes Research (HEOR) Study Section. He has published over 20 peer reviewed manuscripts on healthcare policy and/or healthcare associated infections. In addition, he has published letters in peer reviewed journals including the Journal of the American Medical Association and New England of Medicine. Dr. Kavanagh is also a frequent contributor to the Lexington Herald Leader on Healthcare Issues and was a monthly guest on the Jack Pattie Radio Show on health policy issues for almost 6 years.

Rebecca Kirch, JD

Executive Vice President of Policy and Programs, National Patient Advocate Foundation
Washington, DC

Rebecca Kirch, JD, is Executive Vice President of Policy and Programs for the National Patient Advocate Foundation (NPAF), providing strategic focus and leadership in bringing patient and caregiver voices to the forefront of health reform efforts. As a leading health policy expert and advocate in her field, Ms. Kirch is dedicated to advancing person-centered policies and practices that put people at the heart of health care. Prior to joining NPAF, she served 15 years with the American Cancer Society and its advocacy affiliate, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, directing development and execution of coordinated quality of life and survivorship research, policy, and advocacy activities.

Laura Pennington

Quality Measurement and Improvement Manager, Washington State Health Care Authority
Olympia, WA

Laura Pennington is the Quality Measurement and Improvement Manager within the Clinical Quality and Care Transformation division at the Washington State Health Care Authority. Ms. Pennington manages the Quality Measurement and Monitoring Improvement program, along with the implementation of a statewide common measure set to drive quality within state healthcare purchasing. As the lead for the Shared Decision Making Program, she oversees a process to certify patient decision aids, including spreading the use of shared decision making in practice. She has worked in public health over 19 years, working with communities to implement policy and environmental changes to influence healthy outcomes.

Leslie Schultz, RN, BSN, PhD

Director of Clinical Quality and Patient Safety, Premier Safety Institute®
Charlotte, NC

Leslie Schultz, PhD, is the Director of Clinical Quality and Patient Safety with Premier's Safety Institute®. Dr. Schultz is a nationally recognized expert in documenting and sharing reliable, evidence-based best practices among hospitals in the areas of clinical quality, mortality reduction, harm avoidance and patient safety. Schultz holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Alfred University, a Master of Science in Nursing Administration from the State University of New York at Buffalo, and was granted her Ph.D. in Hospital and Health Administration from The University of Iowa College of Medicine. She is board certified in healthcare quality (CPHQ) and as a Nurse-Executive, Advanced (NEA-BC) and currently serves on the NQF Patient Safety Standing Committee.

Edward Septimus, MD

Vice President for Research and Infectious Diseases, Hospital Corporation of America
Houston, TX

Edward Septimus, MD, is the current Vice President for Research and Infectious Diseases Hospital Corporation of America (HCA). Dr. Septimus received his medical degree from Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and his postgraduate training in internal medicine and infectious diseases at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. Dr. Septimus is board certified in both internal medicine and infectious diseases. He was the first recipient of the IDSA Annual Clinician Award. Dr. Septimus has served as co-chair of the NQF Patient Safety Committee and the NQF Leadership Consortium. He holds a faculty position as Clinical Professor at Texas A&M. He has published over 100 articles and chapters.

Jeffrey Susman, MD

Professor, Northeast Ohio Medical University
Rootstown, OH

Jeff Susman, MD, is a Professor at the Northeast Ohio Medical University College of Medicine, where he served as Dean and Vice President from 2010 through 2017. Dr. Susman graduated from Dartmouth, served in Nebraska as Associate Dean for Primary Care and was Chair, Department of Family Medicine, University of Cincinnati. He was on the Steering Committee of the Cincinnati RWJ Aligning Forces for Quality and Akron Community Health Initiatives. Dr. Susman has had funding from NIMH and AHRQ investigating primary care mental health issues. He has served as Chair of the AAFP Commission on Quality and Practice. He currently serves on the NQF Behavioral Health and Substance Use Standing Committee and CMS Technical Expert Panel for Pain Management.

Kelly Trautner, JD

Executive Director, American Federation of Teachers Nurses and Healthcare Professionals
Washington, DC

Kelly Trautner, JD, is Director of AFT's healthcare division and serves as lead advisor to the AFT President, Randi Weingarten, on health and healthcare issues. Ms. Trautner's prior work includes: President and CEO of The Center for Balanced Living, a facility specializing in treatment of eating disorders; CEO, DEO, and a staff representative for Ohio Nurses Association. She is also a licensed attorney whose practice has included representation of healthcare professionals on matters involving contracts and other issues. Outside of work, Kelly is certified as an instructor in yoga, meditation and Reiki.