



NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM

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Final Roster

Fall 2020 – Spring 2021 Review Cycle, Surgery

Committee Chairs

William Gunnar, MD, JD

Co-chair

Director, National Center for Patient Safety, Veterans Health Administration Ann Arbor, MI

Dr. William Gunnar serves as an Executive Director at the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) National Center for Patient Safety. In this role, he provides oversight to the VHA National Patient Safety Program with goals to minimize harm, evaluate adverse events and close calls, and foster a just culture across the VHA. His prior role (2008-2018) was VHA National Director of Surgery with operational oversight for 137 VHA surgical programs, authority for VHA surgical services policy and the VA Surgical Quality Improvement Program (VASQIP). Dr. Gunnar has the following degrees: BA/MS (Northwestern, 1979), MD (Northwestern, 1983), and JD (Loyola Chicago, 2006). He is certified by the American Board of Surgery and the American Board of Thoracic Surgery, is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, and was appointed Adjunct Clinical Associate Professor, University of Michigan.

Alex Sox-Harris, PhD, MS

Co-chair

Associate Professor, Department of Surgery, Stanford University
Stanford, California

Dr. Alex Sox-Harris is an Associate Professor in the Stanford Department of Surgery and a Research Career Scientist at the Center for Innovation to Implementation (Ci2i) at VA Palo Alto. He is a health services researcher with programs focused on healthcare quality measurement, substance use disorder treatment, and treatment decisions for conditions in which surgery is a major treatment option. He has published over 195 scientific papers, has had continuous federal research funding for over 15 years, and is committed to conducting research that directly informs healthcare policy, delivery, and outcomes.

Committee Members

Ashrith Amarnath, MD

Patient Safety Officer, Sutter Valley Medical Foundation
Sacramento, California

Dr. Amarnath is experienced and certified in healthcare quality and patient safety and has a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt with a demonstrated history of working in the hospital and healthcare industry as well as government. He is trained in general surgery with a background in trauma and acute care surgery. His

skills are focused on quality and performance improvement, cultural transformation, and establishing high reliability in healthcare.

Sherry Bernardo, CRNA

Director of Anesthesia Quality and Practice, Atrium Health
Charlotte, NC

Sherry Bernardo is a practicing certified registered nurse anesthetist and the director of anesthesia quality and practice in a large Level I trauma institution. She works with the North Carolina Board of Nursing to review practice standards for Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists to identify practice opportunities, gaps, and process improvement plans. She recently participated with surgical colleagues as a pilot site for the American College of Surgeons Optimal Resource for Surgical Quality and Safety Verification Program.

Richard D'Agostino, MD

Cardiothoracic Surgery Specialist, Lahey Clinic Medical Center
Burlington, MA

Dr. Richard D'Agostino has practiced cardiothoracic surgery since 1987, both in the academic and private arenas. His clinical focus is adult cardiac surgery with expertise in non-cardiac thoracic surgery. He has been a member of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) Adult Cardiac Surgery Database Taskforce since 2008 and has served as chair of that taskforce since 2015. Dr. D'Agostino is a member of the STS Workforce on National Databases in addition to the STS Aortic Surgery Database and Patient-Reported Outcomes taskforces. His clinical research interest is in database applications, surgical risk stratification, and quality measurement.

TeMaya Eatmon

Atlanta, Georgia

TeMaya Eatmon was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 36 and has had a total of eight surgeries within six months. Ms. Eatmon believes that the initial surgery is the reason she is alive today as a strong and confident patient advocate. Since then, she has committed to make a difference in how cancer is researched, treated, and prevented among minority/young women. Ms. Eatmon became involved both locally and nationally with key organizations that best aligned with her advocacy efforts. Her local involvement includes being a past board member for It's the Journey, Inc., serving on the Hadassah Check It Out! Speakers Bureau. She also participates with her local health system, Northside Hospital, and their Network of Hope. She participates locally and nationally for Susan G. Komen as an Advocate in

Science, African American Health Equity Advisory Committee, and Sisters of Promise. Her commitment, dedication, and passion have not gone unnoticed as the Atlanta Braves recognized her with their Diamond of Hope Award, and the Atlanta Falcons also recognized her with their Dazzle and Dine program. She was also recognized by Ford Motor Company and chosen as a Model of Courage. As a young breast cancer survivor, Ms. Eatmon believes she can bring a diverse, fresh, perspective and voice to the Committee that will inevitably impact change.

Elisabeth Erikson, MD, MPH, FACOG, FACS

Interim Chair, Obstetrics and Gynecology
Manchester, New Hampshire

Dr. Elisabeth Erikson serves as the Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Chief of the Women's Health Service Line at Maine Medical Center. She is a clinician-scientist who is board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology with subspecialty in female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery (also known as urogynecology). She also serves as an American Board of Obstetrics & Gynecology (ABOG) subspecialty certifying examiner. Her research focuses on outcomes in gynecology, the epidemiology of female pelvic floor disorders, health services research in women's health, and quality improvement. Past research endeavors have included investigations of the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (NSHAP), American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Project (ACS NSQIP), the National Survey of Ambulatory Surgery (NSAS), Health and Retirement Study (HRS) and the Nurses' Health Study (NHS). Dr. Erikson has a strong focus on quality improvement and outcomes in gynecologic surgery. She has served as a national advisor of the Quality Improvement and Outcomes Research Network facilitating the collection of data on variation in practice patterns and outcomes for the surgical treatment of pelvic organ prolapse and urinary incontinence across nine different health systems in the United States and Canada.

Michael Firstenberg, MD, FACC, FAIM

Chief of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery, The Medical Center of Aurora
Aurora, CO

Dr. Michael Firstenberg is the chief of cardiothoracic and vascular surgery at The Medical Center of Aurora. He attended Case Western Reserve University Medical School, received his general surgery training at University Hospitals in Cleveland, and completed fellowships in thoracic surgery at The Ohio State University and The Cleveland Clinic. Dr. Firstenberg is a member of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, American Association of Thoracic Surgeons, and the American College of Cardiology. He has authored over 200 peer-reviewed manuscripts, abstracts, and book chapters. He has edited several textbooks on topics including medical leadership, patient safety and extra-corporeal membrane oxygenation.

Linda Groah, MSN, RN, CNOR, NEA-BC FAAN

CEO-Executive Director, Association of periOperative Registered Nurses
Denver, CO

Linda Groah has been the CEO/executive director of the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) since March 2007. She has been actively involved in surgical patient care throughout her career. In 2011, she was named by Becker's as one of the top 10 Leaders in Clinical Quality. In 2013, 2015, and 2017, she was identified by Becker's as one of 50 experts leading patient and staff safety.

Vilma Joseph, MD, MPH, FASA

Professor of Anesthesiology, Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center
Bronx, New York

Dr. Vilma Joseph is a physician anesthesiologist and Professor of Anesthesiology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center. She completed her anesthesiology residency, medical degree, and Master of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Joseph served as the President of the New York State Society of Anesthesiologists (NYSSA) in 2018-2019 and is an active member of several committees and organizations related to public health, professional diversity, and quality management at the local, state, and national levels. Her research interests include health disparities during the perioperative period.

Miklos Kertai, MD, PhD

Professor, Division of Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology, Vanderbilt
Brentwood, TN

Dr. Miklos Kertai is a professor in the Vanderbilt Department of Anesthesiology. He is a trained cardiac anesthesiologist and critical care specialist. He holds a MSc in public health nutrition and a PhD in epidemiology. Dr. Kertai serves as chair of the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists (SCA)/STS Database Committee and as a member of the SCA Quality and Safety leadership Committee. Dr. Kertai's research interest is defining, assessing perioperative risk, and developing clinical strategies to improve patient outcomes. He is a U.S. citizen, whose pathway from Hungary to London to the United States provides an international experience to his healthcare perspective.

Barbara Levy, MD, FACOG, FACS

Clinical Professor, Obstetrics and Gynecology
Washington, DC

Dr. Barbara Levy has over 25 years of experience with direct surgical and primary care, research, and training. She is currently involved with healthcare consulting but previously served in the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' (ACOG's) Office of Global Women's Health programs, the Voluntary Review of Quality of Care, Safety Certification for Outpatient Practice Excellence for Women's Health, American Indian/Alaska Native Health Program, Health Economics, Strategic Health Care Initiatives department and programs for Maternal Mortality and Fetal & Infant Mortality. Prior to ACOG, Dr. Levy was in private practice and medical director of Women's Health and Breast Center and Women's and Children's Services for the Franciscan Health System in Tacoma, WA.

Jaime Ortiz, MD, MBA, FASA

Professor of Anesthesiology, Baylor College of Medicine
Houston, TX

Dr. Jaime Ortiz serves as an attending anesthesiologist at Ben Taub Hospital, a Level I trauma center and the primary teaching hospital of Baylor College of Medicine. He currently serves as deputy chief of anesthesiology service, director of regional anesthesia, co-director of the acute pain management service, and as a member of the Ben Taub Hospital's Operating Room Committee and Quality Review Council. Dr. Ortiz has vast experience providing anesthetics for ambulatory and orthopedic surgery. He has participated in the implementation of several quality improvement initiatives at the department and

hospital level, including collaborating with surgical colleagues in developing enhanced recovery after surgery protocols for a variety of surgical procedures.

Shawn Rangel, MD, MSCE

Senior Surgical Advisor for Quality and Safety, Boston Children's Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts

Dr. Shawn Rangel is a general pediatric surgeon at Boston Children's Hospital where he serves as the Senior Surgical Advisor for Quality & Safety and Weitzman Endowed Chair for Quality & Safety Research. Dr. Rangel has chaired multiple national committees with the charge of advancing the agenda of high-quality surgical care through measurement and process improvement. These have included the American Pediatric Surgical Association's (APSA) Quality & Safety Committee, American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Section on Surgery's Committee for the Delivery of Surgical Care, and ACS Children's Surgery Data Steering Committee, among others. In collaboration with the ACS, Dr. Rangel has also led the development and oversight of several national benchmarking collaboratives, including NSQIP-Pediatric efforts to optimize appendicitis care and antimicrobial stewardship. Dr. Rangel currently serves on the editorial boards of Annals of Surgery, JAMA Pediatrics, Journal of Pediatric Surgery, and is an associate editor for Pediatric Quality & Safety.

Kimberly Richardson

Chicago, IL

Kimberly Richardson is a seven-year survivor of ovarian cancer. She has 25 years of urban planning and community economic development experience. She has been active since treatment in various forms of advocacy and with several advocacy organizations. As an advocate leader for the Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance (OCRA), Kimberly speaks with legislators on the importance of funding ovarian cancer research and is a member of the OCRA Health Disparities Committee. As an ambassador for the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS), Kimberly developed a strategy for roundtable discussions on the role of patients and public involvement in translational research.

Christopher Saigal, MD, MPH

Professor, UCLA
Los Angeles, California

Dr. Christopher Saigal is a Professor and Vice Chair, Department of Urology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). An R-01-funded health services researcher, Dr. Saigal currently is supported as the principal investigator for over \$6 million in National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant funding. His research focuses on the nexus of quality of care, access to care, and practice pattern trends in urology. His clinical focus is urologic oncology, and he practices at both the Westwood and Santa Monica UCLA campuses. Dr. Saigal was an American Urological Association (AUA) Gallagher Health Policy Scholar and is very active on many AUA health policy and quality committees.

Rajdeep Sandhu, MD, MMM, FACS, FSVS

Director of Medical Affairs, Becton Dickinson
Warwick, RI

Dr. Rajdeep Sandhu is the director of medical affairs for Becton Dickinson's surgery business. He provides medical and scientific expertise on a wide range of issues related to product development and

patient care. Previously, Dr. Sandhu served as a vascular surgeon, medical director of the Intensive Care Unit, and chief of vascular surgery at Heritage Valley Health System in Pennsylvania. Dr. Sandhu received his medical degree from Dartmouth Medical School. He completed his general surgery residency at University of Nebraska and fellowships in transplant surgery and vascular/endovascular surgery. He received a Master of Medical Management degree from Carnegie Mellon University.

Salvatore T. Scali, MD, FACS, DFSVS, RPVI

Associate Professor of Surgery, University of
Florida Gainesville, Florida

Dr. Salvatore Scali practices at both University Health-Shands hospital at the University of Florida and the Malcolm Randall VA Medical Center of Gainesville, Florida. He is the fellowship director for the vascular surgery fellowship at the University of Florida and Medical Director for the Non-Invasive Vascular Ultrasound Laboratory. He obtained his medical degree from Georgetown University in 2001 after which he completed both general surgery residency at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and the T32 Harvard-Longwood Vascular Biology research fellowship in Boston, Massachusetts. After this time, he completed a clinical fellowship in Vascular Surgery at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. Since 2010, he has been a faculty member at the University of Florida and maintains an active NIH funded research laboratory. Regionally and nationally, Dr. Scali holds leadership positions within the Society for Vascular Surgery, as well as with its patient safety organization, the Vascular Quality Initiative.

Allan Siperstein, MD

Chairman Endocrine Surgery, Cleveland Clinic
Cleveland, Ohio

Dr. Allan Siperstein is the Chair of Endocrine Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic. He is Program Director for the General Surgery Residency and Endocrine Surgery Fellowship, and he co-directs the Surgical Outcomes Fellowship. He obtained medical degree at the University of Texas, Southwestern Medical School at Dallas, and general surgery residency/endocrine surgery training at University of California San Francisco. Since 1999, he has been a staff member at the Cleveland Clinic. He has had a long interest in quality and patient safety. He has experience in improving compliance with surgical care improvement project measures and is a physician champion for the National Surgical Quality Improvement Program.

Joshua D. Stein, MD, MS

Associate Professor, University of Michigan, Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences,
Department of Health Management & Policy, Director, Center for Eye Policy and Innovation
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dr. Stein is a board-certified ophthalmologist and fellowship-trained glaucoma specialist with 10 years of experience caring for patients with ocular diseases. In addition, he is a health services researcher who has published extensively on topics including eye service utilization, safety, and outcomes of ocular surgical procedures, costs of eye care, quality of life of patients with ocular diseases, and the cost-effectiveness of different interventions for glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and macular degeneration. His training includes a master's degree in evaluative clinical sciences from Dartmouth College and a health policy fellowship at the Center for Healthcare Research and Transformation.

Kevin Wang, MHA

Senior Director, Performance Programs, Hospital for Special Surgery
New York, New York

Kevin Wang is the Senior Director for Performance Programs at the Center for the Advancement of Value in Musculoskeletal Care at Hospital for Special Surgery. His expertise includes the use of improvement science to drive change management, process improvement, and deliver better outcomes around quality, safety, and value. He has experience around designing commercial, quality-based programs with major insurers, including bundled payments and pay-for-performance initiatives. Before joining the department, he previously held the role of Director, Quality & Value at Columbia University Irving Medical Center Department of Orthopedic Surgery.

Mark A. Wilson, MD, PhD

National Director of Surgery, Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC

Dr. Mark A. Wilson is the national director of surgery for the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and oversees policy, operations, and quality programs for VHA surgery. He is a general surgeon with expertise in minimally invasive and gastrointestinal surgery with academic and veteran practices for over 30 years. He served as chief of surgery and vice-president at the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Pittsburgh Healthcare System from 2001-2019 and maintains a faculty appointment at University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Wilson's past duties include regional chief surgical consultant (VISN4) and medical director of the VA Surgical Quality Improvement Program (2009-2019). He continues to participate in funded research assessing surgical quality programs and outcomes.