

## New York State's Continuum of Behavioral Health: Expand, Strengthen and Revitalize!

## Speaker Bios

### AMIR BASSIRI

*Medicaid Director, NYS Department of Health*

Mr. Bassiri is the Medicaid Director for the New York State Department of Health (DOH). He joined the Department of Health in 2019 as Chief of Staff to the Medicaid Director and recently served as the Deputy Medicaid Director, overseeing the operation and performance of nine Medicaid Divisions. Collectively, these nine Divisions are comprised of more than 750 State staff, over 500 contracted staff and management of over 300 contracts, including some of the State's largest technology, actuarial and financial audit contracts, along with health plans. Prior to his work with the Department, he worked as a Senior Policy Advisor for Health in the Governor's Office under the Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services. He earned his B.A. in both Economics and Psychology from the University of California, Davis, before earning a Master's in Social Work (M.S.W) from Columbia University.



### JOHN COPPOLA

*Executive Director, NYS Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers (ASAP)*

Mr. Coppola has been the Executive Director of the New York Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers, Inc. (ASAP) since its inception. Mr. Coppola has responsibility for representing the interests of alcoholism and substance abuse treatment, prevention, recovery, research, and training providers throughout New York State. Prior to becoming Executive Director of ASAP, Mr. Coppola worked for Catholic Charities of Montgomery County as the Program Director for their outpatient substance abuse program, the Associate Director, and Executive Director. During his tenure at Catholic Charities, Mr. Coppola served on the Executive Committee of the NYS Association of Substance Abuse Programs. He also served as Chairperson of the NYS Catholic Conference Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Committee, as Chairperson of the Catholic Charities USA Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Committee, and is a Past-President of the State Associations of Addiction Services, the national association of state associations representing chemical dependency programs. He has served on numerous national, regional and statewide advisory committees, and served in an advisory role with the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Mr. Coppola received his Masters Degree in Social Work from the State University of New York at Albany and his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Dominican College. He is a Licensed Master Social Worker.



### CHINAZO CUNNINGHAM, MD

*Commissioner, NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports*

Dr. Cunningham is a physician, researcher, and public health professional who brings over 20 years of expertise in substance use treatment to OASAS. Prior to joining OASAS, she served as the Executive Deputy Commissioner of Mental Hygiene at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, was a practicing physician at Montefiore Health System, and a Professor of Medicine, Family and Social Medicine, and Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Dr. Cunningham has more than 20 years' experience in research, care, and program-development that focuses on people who use drugs. She has also partnered with community-based organizations to develop pioneering programs to promote the health of this population. Dr. Cunningham led one of the first clinics in New York City to integrate buprenorphine into primary care. She has trained hundreds of doctors to treat substance use disorders in primary care. She has also led several research studies and published numerous research articles that focus on treating substance use disorders.



### AMY DORIN

*President and CEO, The Coalition for Behavioral Health*

Amy has spent her entire career in the health and human services arena as a clinician, administrator, executive and consultant in hospitals, government, and nonprofit community-based organizations. At the Mayor's Office of Operations, Amy held the position of Deputy Director for Health and Human Services. At FECS, she was the Senior Vice President for Community Behavioral Health. In this position she led a large network of mental health treatment, recovery, residential, care coordination and health home programs serving more than 25,000 people annually throughout NYC and Nassau and Suffolk Counties. Under her leadership, FECS received the 2013 Suicide Prevention Award from the NYS Office of Mental Health's Suicide Prevention Center and the 2002 Eli Lilly Award for Behavioral Healthcare Leadership in Time of Disaster, after 9/11. Amy is the recipient of the 2015 Cognitive Remediation in Psychiatry Conference's Science to Practice Award. She is a Fellow at the New York Academy of Medicine and the Vice Chair of Vibrant Emotional Health's Professional Advisory Board.



## DEBBIAN FLETCHER-BLAKE, APRN, FNP

*CEO, Vocational Instruction Project (VIP)*

Debbian Fletcher-Blake, APRN, FNP, is the CEO of Vocational Instruction Project (VIP) Community Services, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization in the Bronx that offers comprehensive medical, behavioral health, housing, vocational and supportive services to the community. She served as administrator and medical provider in several health centers for over 25 years and as a Nursing instructor at New York University.



Ms. Fletcher-Blake has been active in building culturally competent workforces, tackling healthcare inequities, focusing on strategies to eliminate health disparities, and ensuring community members are active participants in deciding systems of care. Due to her vast experience in quality assurance, integrated care, physical and behavioral health care delivery systems, Debbian has served as a subject matter expert on numerous clinical and administrative projects both locally and nationally.

In 2019, for her leadership, vision, and dedication to reducing health disparities in the communities and transforming lives of the underserved populations, Debbian was selected one of CRAIN's Notable Women in Health Care and eminent New York's health care's leading women. She is also the recipient of the prestigious Dr. Philip W. Brickner Award Honoree from CHCANYS for advocating and championing for the medical needs of those who are homeless and vulnerable and, most recently, received a 2021 Empire Whole Health Heroes Awards for her unrelentless contributions to the Bronx.

Ms. Fletcher-Blake serves on multiple Boards, Councils and Coalitions, including Montefiore Nyack Hospital, Community Health Care Association of New York State, NYC Behavioral Health Council, Coalition of Medication Assisted Treatment Providers, Homeless Services United. She was also a 2020 mentor for the National Behavioral Health Council's CCBHCs mentorship program.

With an Executive Leadership Certificate in Health Information Technology from the University of Colorado School of Nursing, Debbian brings expertise and efficiency in coordinating health and social services programs through health information technology.

Ms. Fletcher-Blake is a Board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner. She holds a Master of Science in Nursing from Pace University. Debbian holds an Executive Leadership certificate from UCLA School of Business and Bachelor of Science degrees in Nursing and Chemistry.

## DEBRA PANTIN, MSW, MS

*President and CEO, Outreach & Chair, Transition Board for ASAP/The Coalition*

Debra Pantin joined Outreach in July 2018 as President and CEO – the second person to hold that position in the agency's 39-year history. The industry veteran possesses more than 30 years of experience in the substance use and mental health treatment, housing and homeless, and healthcare fields. Her exceptional background ranks Pantin among New York City's top nonprofit professionals today.



To mitigate the impact of the opioid Pandemic New Yorkers have endured for many years, Governor Kathy Hochul recently appointed Pantin to serve as a Member of her Opioid Settlement Board. This board has been commissioned to work with the Governor "in delivering results to improve prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction for New Yorkers who need our support."

Pantin began her career as a social worker and rose through the ranks to executive-level positions. Leveraging her leadership skills, she instituted and managed organizational changes that redefined agencies. She strategically expanded service portfolios, adding substance use treatment facilities (residential, outpatient, ambulatory detoxification and mental health) and a multitude of housing and special projects.

Previously, Pantin was the CEO of VIP Community Services, a Bronx-based social services organization offering housing/shelter, outpatient counseling, medical and mental health services to approximately 15,000 clients. While there, she successfully integrated healthcare into the agency's continuum of care and supported VIP's efforts to successfully gain a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) designation. During her tenure, VIP opened a mental health clinic, added care coordination services and brought ambulatory detox to its OASAS-funded outpatient clinic. The agency experienced unprecedented growth during her tenure with annual operations doubling from \$18 million to \$38 million.

Pantin formerly served as Chief Operating Officer at Palladia Inc. (formerly Project Return). She directed operations and programs that annually served 26,000 clients with a budget of \$50 million. As a key member of the leadership team, Pantin influenced programmatic and organizational change such as the launch of three outpatient programs in the Bronx and Manhattan. She also established a CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) intervention for the agency's community-based mental health services. Additionally, Pantin championed the adoption of NIATx (Network for the Improvement of Addiction Services) process as well as data-driven management to measure program performance. Pantin spent 25 years at the agency, working in a range of social work, clinical, program administration and executive positions.

Currently, Pantin is President of the Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State (ASAPNYS) and is the Chair of Mental Health News Education's Board of Directors. She participates in numerous national, state and local boards, and was previously the Co-Chair of the Substance Abuse Treatment Committee for the Coalition of Behavioral Health Agencies.

Pantin received her Master's in Social Work from Hunter College School of Social Work, Master of Science in Management and Health Care Management from the University of Rochester Simon Business School, and Bachelor of Arts from SUNY College at Purchase.

## MONICA E. OSS, MS

*Founder & Chief Executive Officer, OPEN MINDS*

Monica E. Oss, M.S. is the founder of OPEN MINDS and serves as its chief executive officer, executive editor of its publications and web sites, and executive lead of its consulting engagements. For the past three decades, Ms. Oss has led the OPEN MINDS team and its research on health and human service market trends and its national consulting practice. She is well known for her numerous books and articles focused on the strategic and marketing implications of the evolving health and human service field – and its focus on the verticals of the field serving consumers with chronic conditions and complex support needs.



Ms. Oss has extensive experience in developing and implementing growth strategies for a wide array of organizations in the field. She has expertise in industry trend analysis, in reimbursement and rate setting, and creating actionable plans for market success. In her role, she has led numerous engagements with state Medicaid plans, county governments, private insurers and health plans, service provider organizations, technology vendors, neurotechnology and pharmaceutical organizations, and investment banking firms – with a focus on the implications of financing changes on delivery system design.

Prior to founding OPEN MINDS, Ms. Oss served as an executive with a national managed behavioral health organization, with responsibility for market development and actuarial analysis and capitation-based rate setting. She also held a position as vice president of the U.S. risk management and underwriting division of an international insurance company.

Ms. Oss has been the keynote speaker at the conferences of dozens of national associations and has been published in a wide range of professional journals and trade publications. She has provided Congressional and state legislative testimony on issues as diverse as the financial impact of parity and payer medication access policies.

Ms. Oss has led a range of industry research and consultation initiatives, serving as principal investigator on research projects that include examination of national managed care enrollment and service patterns; development of provider rate structures for government entities; creation of return-on-investment models for technology investments; design of performance-based compensation models within public and private health plans; and analysis of the economic impact of changes in benefit design, adoption of evidence-based practices, and new technologies.

## ANN SULLIVAN, MD

*Commissioner, NYS Office of Mental Health*

Ann Sullivan, MD is the Commissioner of the New York State Office of Mental Health. Since 2014, Dr. Sullivan has led the transformation of the state hospital system, the expansion of community based treatment, improving mental health care for incarcerated individuals and post-release care. She has supported the Suicide Prevention Office's efforts to make New York a suicide safer state. She is a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and has served as the Speaker of the American Psychiatric Association's Assembly and on its Board of Trustees. Dr. Sullivan is a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, a member of the American College of Psychiatrists and the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry.



## REYNA TAYLOR

*SVP of Public Policy, National Council for Mental Wellbeing*

Ms. Taylor brings extensive experience with federal public policy initiatives to protect access and affordability to her role as Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Advocacy at the National Council for Mental Wellbeing where she leads public policy and government affairs activities, supervises legislative matters and guides overall public policy strategy. With nearly two decades of specialty pharmaceutical and medical device experience, Ms. Taylor has a wide range of knowledge on public policy issues, including Medicare, Medicaid and commercial management of managed care organizations, hospitals, pharmacies and mental health centers. She holds a Bachelor of Science in neuroscience from Bates College and earned a Master of Science in biotechnology and Master of Business Administration from Johns Hopkins University. Currently, she serves on the board of the Mental Health Liaison Group.

