

May 7, 2025 - Day 1 Agenda

9:00 am – 9:15 am | Conference Welcome

Speakers:

- Scott Darius, Executive Director, Florida Voices for Health
- Bethany Addington, Digital Media Specialist, Florida Voices for Health
- Maria Sutter, Disability Advocate

9:15 am – 10:35 am | 2025 Florida Legislative Session Debrief: Impacts on Health Policy and Beyond

Our panelists will have an in-depth discussion about the key health policy developments from the 2025 Florida legislative session. They'll offer insights into the most significant legislative takeaways from session and what their anticipated impacts will be on our health care system. From Medicaid, disabilities to dental care to and workforce issues, learn what passed, what stalled, and what it all means for the future of health care in Florida.

Panelists:

- Representative Bruce Antone, Florida House of Representatives, District 41
- Ron Watson, Founder and President, Watson Strategies
- Jonathan Webber, Florida Policy Director, Southern Poverty Law Center

10:50 am – 12:10 pm | View From the Hill: Health Policy at the Federal Level

This session will explore key health policy proposals being debated in Washington and their potential impact on states, providers, and patients. Our panel of policy and organizing experts will also share effective advocacy strategies, equipping attendees with the tools to engage lawmakers, shape policy discussions, and make their voices heard. Whether you're a seasoned advocate or new to the policy arena, this session will provide invaluable insights on how to drive meaningful change.

Panelists:

- Adam Searing, Associate Professor, Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families
- Bailey Reavis, Senior Manager of Government Affairs, Families USA
- Karla Martinez, Senior Policy Analyst, Community Catalyst

12:10 pm – 12:45 pm | Networking Lunch

A buffet lunch will be served and attendees will have the opportunity to connect with each other.

12:45 pm – 1:30 pm | Keynote Speaker: Dr. Jamila Michener, MA, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Government, Cornell University

Dr. Michener will discuss the learnings from her book, "Fragmented Democracy: Medicaid, Federalism and Unequal Politics," examining how Medicaid affects democratic citizenship. Unpacking how federalism transforms Medicaid beneficiaries' interpretations of government and structures their participation in politics, "Fragmented Democracy" assesses American political life from the vantage point(s) of those who are living in or near poverty.

May 7, 2025 - Day 1 Agenda (cont'd)**1:45 pm – 2: 45 pm | Advancing Oral Health in Florida: Best Practices for Systems Change**

This panel discussion will explore innovative strategies and proven best practices to improve oral health access and outcomes through systems change. Panelists will share insights into successful policy advocacy efforts; community-centered models that empower parents and patients to become advocates and partners in care; and educational approaches that prepare the next generation of oral health providers to serve diverse populations with cultural competence.

Panelists:

- Kaz Rafia, DDS MBA MPH, Adjunct Assistant Professor, Center for Integrative Global Oral Health, University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine
- Jolene Rodriguez, FL Oral Health Parent Advisory Committee & Family Advocate Champion
- Ben Barber, Vice President of Policy, Virginia Health Catalyst
- Erica Craven, Oral Health Coalition Manager, Florida Voices for Health (Moderator)

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm | Rural Realities: Overcoming Barriers to Health Care Access in Florida's Underserved Communities

This panel will feature a candid conversation with providers working on the front lines—a small rural clinic, a large rural hospital, and a technical expert specializing in reintroducing and rebuilding local systems of care. Together, they will explore the unique strengths and structural obstacles within rural health care delivery, share lessons learned from innovative local solutions, and discuss opportunities to reimagine rural health systems for resilience.

Panelists & Speakers:

- Denise M Schentrup, APRN, DNP, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs University of Florida College of Nursing and Family Nurse Practitioner Archer Family Health Care
- Dr. Charles Hobson, MD, Chief Medical Officer, HCA Florida's Lake City Hospital
- Steven Davis, FACHE, MBA, Director of Business Development & External Affairs, Rural Health Redesign Center
- Jeff Feller, CEO, WellFlorida (Moderator)
- Maria Plata, Senior Project Manager, Partners in Health (Storyteller)

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm | Awards Ceremony & Happy Hour!

Join us for an extended time of networking and to celebrate this 2025's Advocates of the Year.

Awardees:

- Holly Bullard, Florida Policy Institute
- Patrick Haley, University of Florida College of Medicine
- Patricia Ward, Jacksonville resident and oral health advocate

May 8, 2025 - Day 2 Agenda

8:00 am – 9:00 am | Breakfast Networking

9:00 am – 10:00 am | From Your Backyard to DC: How to Launch a Campaign and Build Coalitions

This panel will bring together experienced advocates and organizers to share practical strategies for launching successful advocacy campaigns, building strong coalitions, and mobilizing communities around shared goals. Panelists will offer real-world examples of what it takes to move an issue from conversation to legislation, how to navigate power structures, and how to keep momentum in the face of challenges.

Panelists:

- Mitch Emerson, Campaign Manager, Florida Decides Healthcare
- Ali Bloomgarden, Senior Manager of Advocacy Engagement, Partners In Health
- Taylor Aguilera, Interim Director of Public Policy, Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida
- Acadia Jacob, Advocacy Director, Florida Voices for Health (Moderator)

10:05 am – 11:45 am | Attorney Office Hours: Lobbying Limits 101 and the Power of Legal Advocacy

Understanding the legal boundaries of advocacy is essential, especially for nonprofits and other mission-driven organizations. In this session, attorneys with expertise in nonprofit and constitutional law will break down the legal limits on lobbying for different entities, including 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations, public agencies, and coalitions. The panel will also explore how the court system can serve as a powerful arena for advocacy, from strategic litigation to defending rights and expanding protections.

Panelists:

- Tim Mooney, Senior Counsel, Alliance for Justice
- Caitlyn Clibbon, JD, Director of Community and Healthcare Services, Disability Rights Florida
- Katie Roders-Turner, Executive Director, Family Healthcare Foundation (Moderator)

11:45 am – 12:30 pm | Networking Lunch

12:30 pm – 1:45 pm | Bridging the Divide: Effective Health Care Messaging for Conservative Audiences

This session brings together communications experts and community leaders to discuss strategies for engaging conservative audiences in meaningful conversations about health policy. Panelists will share insights on framing issues in ways that resonate, finding common ground, and addressing concerns effectively. Whether you're advocating for policy change or communicating with the public, this discussion will provide practical tools to craft messages that connect across ideological lines.

Panelists:

- Dr. Joel Rudman, Former Florida State Representative, District 3
- Alison Betty, Co-Founder, Alignco
- Susan Harbin, Senior Director, Government Relations, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

1:45 pm – 2:00 pm | Closing Session