

FUTURE HEALTH➤BEST

Practices for Advancing Care

March 31, 2023 | Waltham, MA — Conference Summary

Inaugural Conference Shares Innovation and Inspiration

The Massachusetts Medical Society with NEJM Group launched a flagship conference, “Future Health: Best Practices for Advancing Care,” on March 31 to showcase and discuss opportunities for delivering more equitable and sustainable care.

Opening keynote speaker Ashish K. Jha, MD, MP, coordinator of the White House COVID-19 Response Team, called for physicians to reliably communicate with patients and the public. “Flooding the zone with good information is something all of you can do,” Jha said. He set the stage for sessions that followed by highlighting other opportunities ahead. “While the pandemic has been horrendous,” he said, “it has also brought many great innovations.”

Attendees chose sessions from three tracks: Reimaging Care Delivery, Public Health, and Behavioral Health and Wellness. “Being able to bounce from one track to another was good. I’m learning things that are happening all around the state,” said attendee Sarah Kleinschmidt, MD, of Baystate Emergency Medicine.

More than 20 sponsors and supporting organizations helped to bring the conference to fruition, particularly founding sponsors BlueCross BlueShield of Massachusetts, Coverys, and FirstNet.

In her closing keynote, Marcela G. del Carmen, MD, MPH, president of the Massachusetts General Physicians Organization, spoke of moving care teams closer to the communities they serve, using technology to benefit patients, and recruiting and developing people from diverse backgrounds in the health care workforce.

“It’s interesting to hear from people who are courageous enough to do what is not being done elsewhere,” said Newton pathologist Helen Cajigas, MD, a member of the conference’s physician advisory board. “We can’t go back to the way we were. The pandemic brought some positive lessons. We can recognize and retain what was good and invent what needs to be fixed.”

– Sandra Jacobs, *Vital Signs* Editor



Top left: Opening keynote speaker Ashish Jha, MD, MPH calls for sustaining successful innovations that emerged during the pandemic.
Top right: Audience members respond to his honest and engaging call to action.

Center, left to right: Faculty Michael Curry, Esq.; John Auerbach, MBA; Paul Biddinger, MD, FACEP; and Harold Cox share a light moment during the panel on “Improving Public Health Investment and Clinical Care Integration.”

Bottom: Frontline physicians and health policy leaders catch up over breakfast. From lower left counterclockwise: John Auerbach, MBA, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Sandhya Rao, MD, Blue Cross Blue Shield Massachusetts; John Walsh, MD, and Simone Wildes, MD, both South Shore Hospital; Christopher Garofalo, MD, family medicine physician; and Thad Schilling, MD, Reliant Medical Group.



Photos by Doug Bradshaw

WHAT ATTENDEES SAY ABOUT FUTURE HEALTH BEST

“It was inspiring. The meeting hammered home the reasons we are physicians. And it was good to hear practical strategies for enhancing the joy we can have in practicing medicine.”

Ilana Schmitt, MD — pediatrician at University Health Services, Amherst

“To come to an event like this and hear innovators and new ideas . . . it gets your heart pumping. It fills my soul to hear there is direction — and to see that where health care is today is not where it will be tomorrow.”

Karthik Ravindran, MD — primary care physician, Framingham



Above, top to bottom: Keynote speaker Marcela G. del Carmen, MD, MPH, President, Massachusetts General Physicians Organization, delivers the closing address, “The Transformation of Academic Medicine to Better Serve Patients and Support Clinicians.”

Michelle Dalal, MD, Medical Director of University Health and Counseling Services, Northeastern University, exchanges business cards with faculty Amy Vinson, MD, FAAP, Boston Children's Hospital.

Mallika Marshall, MD, Medical Reporter at CBS Boston/WBZ-TV and practicing physician, faculty member of the panel “Putting the Public Back in Public Health: Communicating Effectively in Crisis” (left).

Thomas Sequist, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer at Mass General Brigham, faculty member of the panel “Pathways and Policies for Achieving Equity” (right).

Left, top to bottom: Barbara Spivak, MD, MMS incoming MMS President; Lois Cornell, MMS Executive Vice President; Keynote speaker Ashish Jha, MD, MPH; and Theodore A. Calianos II, MD, FACS, outgoing MMS President.

Faculty in the panel “Care Delivery Transformations: New Models of Care” included: Philip Ciampa, MD, MPH, Atrius Health; Melissa Nass, MD, MPH, Boston Medical Center; Constantinos Michaelidis, MD, MBA, MS, UMass Memorial Health; and Ana Tuya Fulton, MD, MBA, FACP, AGSF, Care New England Health System.

Featured Faculty Eric Rubin, MD, PhD, Editor-In-Chief, *New England Journal of Medicine*, and Namita Seth Mohta, MD, Executive Editor, *NEJM Catalyst Innovations in Care Delivery*, gather with outgoing MMS President Theodore A. Calianos II, MD, FACS, as the conference begins.

