



## FCC DIGITAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM: Advancing Broadband Connectivity as a Social Determinant of Health

There is emerging evidence demonstrating a strong relationship between broadband access, Internet adoption, and health outcomes. As such, fostering digital equity and health equity are inextricably intertwined. For many years, stakeholders have viewed broadband as a critical means to connect health care providers and patients and to close gaps in access to services related to time and distance. Unfortunately, many Americans are still falling through the broadband health gap. One promising solution for bridging this gap may lie in a paradigm shift—in recognizing that broadband plays a more direct and consequential role—as “a social determinant of health.”

This virtual event, hosted by the FCC’s Connect2Health Task Force, will gather public and private sector thought leaders from a variety of disciplines to discuss issues around recognizing broadband connectivity (i.e., access, adoption, and/or use) as a social determinant of health. Social determinants of health reflect the fact that health begins where we live, learn, work, and play; they are the non-medical factors (including education, health care access, income, and employment) that affect health or can serve as a predictor of one’s health status. Participants will explore the implications of formally recognizing broadband connectivity as a social determinant of health on national broadband policies, population health, and government-wide efforts to promote health equity and enhance the health and well-being of all Americans. Achieving digital health equity through improving broadband access and adoption is an FCC priority and will be an overarching theme of this event.

**Date:** **Thursday, March 3, 2022 (10:00 am – 4:30 pm EST) (Virtual Event)**

10:00 am – 10:20 am **Welcome, Remarks, and Introductions**

*P. Michele Ellison, JD, General Counsel, FCC and Chair, Connect2Health<sup>FCC</sup> Task Force*  
*The Honorable Geoffrey Starks, Commissioner, FCC*

### **Program Overview**

*David Ahern, PhD, Senior Advisor, Connect2Health<sup>FCC</sup> Task Force*

10:20 am – 11:25 am **PANEL 1: Current Perspectives—Relationship Between Broadband and Health**

Foundational segment, consisting of mini-presentations, that explores key research addressing the relationship between broadband and health, and the emerging view that broadband connectivity is a social determinant of health.

- *Arielle Mancuso*, PhD, Director for Research and Data Analytics, Connect2Health<sup>FCC</sup> Task Force
- *Carter R. Blakey*, Deputy Director, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, and Director of the Division of Community Strategies, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- *Natalie C. Benda*, PhD, Department of Population Health Sciences, Weill Cornell Medicine
- *Benjamin Sommers*, MD, PhD, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health Policy, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; *Madjid “MJ” Karimi*, PhD, CPH, Division of Health Care Quality and Outcomes, Office of Health Policy, ASPE, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and *Euny C. Lee*, PhD, MS, BA, CDC Public Health Informatics Fellow, ASPE, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- *Karen Onyeije*, LLM, JD, BS, Acting Deputy General Counsel, FCC, and Chief of Staff, Connect2Health<sup>FCC</sup> Task Force

**Remarks**

*The Honorable Brendan Carr*, Commissioner, FCC

11:25 am – 11:35 am **Brief Break**

11:35 am – 12:00 pm **Fireside Chat: The Value Proposition of Broadband Connectivity in Health**

The long view about the importance and value of broadband connectivity in health and health care, including the key question of how establishing broadband connectivity as a social determinant of health domain could serve to reduce health disparities, promote health equity, and enhance the health and well-being of all Americans.

Moderator: *David Ahern*, PhD, Senior Advisor, Connect2Health<sup>FCC</sup> Task Force

Guest: *Donald Berwick*, MD, MPP, FRCP, KBE, President Emeritus and Senior Fellow, Institute for Healthcare Improvement; Faculty, Department of Health Care Policy, Harvard Medical School; Former Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm **PANEL 2: How Connectivity is Enhancing Health and Transforming Health Care; Emerging Technologies and Innovations**

Insights into how broadband connectivity is enhancing and transforming health as well as the provision of care and other human services in both rural and urban areas. A look ahead at the future of broadband and health; emerging health technologies, including the impact of 5G and AI/ML; and the potential

implications of these technological innovations for the national interest in improving population health and promoting health equity.

Moderator: *René Quashie*, Vice President of Policy & Regulatory Affairs, Digital Health, Consumer Technology Association

- *Karen S. Rheuban*, MD, Professor of Pediatrics, Senior Associate Dean of Continuing Medical Education, and Director, University of Virginia Karen S. Rheuban Center for Telehealth
- *David C. Rhew*, MD, Global Chief Medical Officer, VP Healthcare, Worldwide Commercial, Microsoft
- *Michael R. Crawford*, MBA, MHL, Associate Dean for Strategy, Outreach, and Innovation, Howard University College of Medicine
- *Joe Drygas*, Vice President - Global Business – Healthcare, AT&T
- *Elisabeth Myers*, MBA, Deputy Director, Office of Policy, Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology

1:00 pm – 1:30 pm

### **Lunch Break**

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

### **PANEL 3: Connecting the Dots—Establishing Broadband Connectivity as a Social Determinant of Health Domain**

Discussion of whether and how broadband connectivity (i.e., access, adoption, and/or use) should be recognized as a social determinant of health and the potential benefits of this framework for reducing health disparities, promoting health equity, and enhancing the health and well-being of all Americans.

Moderator: Chris Gibbons, MD, MPH, Senior Advisor, Connect2Health<sup>FCC</sup> Task Force

- *Gopal Singh*, PhD, MS, MSc, DPS, Senior Health Equity Advisor, Office of Health Equity, Health Resources & Services Administration
- *Jill Egeth*, PhD, MS, BA, Managing Director, Healthcare Delivery & New Opportunities, The MITRE Corporation
- *Susan Dentzer*, MS, Incoming Chief Executive Officer, America's Physician Groups
- *Gretchen Purcell Jackson*, MD, PhD, FACS, FACMI, FAMIA, President and Board Chair, American Medical Informatics Association
- *Lauren Riplinger*, JD, BA, Vice President of Policy and Government Affairs, American Health Information Management Association

2:30 pm – 3:30 pm

### **PANEL 4: Looking Ahead—Implications of Broadband Connectivity as a Social Determinant of Health Domain on Government Policies, Clinical Care, and Health Equity**

The various implications of recognizing broadband connectivity as a social determinant of health domain on population health, digital equity, health equity, and government policies and programs, including broadband and telehealth policies.

Moderator: *David Blumenthal*, MD, MPP, President, The Commonwealth Fund; former National Coordinator for Health Information Technology

- *John Horrigan*, PhD, BA, Senior Fellow, Benton Institute for Broadband and Society
- *Joshua Edmonds*, MPP, BA, Director of Digital Inclusion, Department of Innovation and Technology, City of Detroit
- *Mikelle Moore*, MBA, MS, Senior Vice President and Chief Community Health Officer, Intermountain Healthcare
- *Jorge A. Rodriguez*, MD, Digital Health Equity Researcher and Hospitalist, Division of General Internal Medicine and Primary Care, Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School
- *William England*, PhD, JD, Senior Advisor, Office for the Advancement of Telehealth, Health Resources & Services Administration
- *Adie Tomer*, MPP, BA, Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution

3:30 pm – 3:35 pm

### **Brief Break**

3:35 pm – 4:25 pm

### **PANEL 5: Next Steps—A Focus on Broadband and Health Data and Social Determinants of Health Research**

A focused look at current and emerging research on the relationship between broadband and health, potential gaps in research that need to be addressed to support establishing broadband connectivity as a social determinant of health domain, and opportunities for near-term coordination or collaboration to accelerate bridging the connectivity divide to promote health.

Moderator: *David Ahern*, PhD, Senior Advisor, Connect2Health<sup>FCC</sup> Task Force

- *Robin Gelburd*, JD, President, FAIR Health
- *Kiersten Frobom*, MPA, BA, Senior Evidence Analyst on Evidence & Policy Analysis Team, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Population Health Institute, University of Wisconsin
- *Adam Perzynski*, PhD, Associate Professor, Center for Health Care Research and Policy in the Population Health Research Institute at MetroHealth and Case Western Reserve University; Founding Director of the Patient Centered Media Lab
- *Patricia Keenan*, PhD, Senior Researcher, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- *Robin Vanderpool*, DrPH, Chief, Health Communication and Informatics Research Branch, Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences, National Cancer Institute

4:25 – 4:30 pm

### **C2H Task Force Closing Remarks**