

HITAC Hearing on Improving Affordability in Healthcare

Presenter Biographies

May 7, 2026





Dr. Steve Kim, Co-Founder & Chief Medical Officer, Valer

Dr. Steve Kim is Co-Founder and Chief Medical Officer of Valer. Valer's mission is to simplify and speed today's manual prior authorization and referral workflows so that patients can get the care they need and deserve. Valer provides prior authorization and referral workflow automation for hospitals/health systems, ambulatory practices, and national DME suppliers. Dr. Kim founded Valer out of his own personal frustrations with today's manual prior authorization and referral processes that negatively impacted his patients and staff.

Prior to Valer, Dr. Kim was an attending pediatric urologic surgeon at the Children's Hospital Los Angeles and Assistant Professor of Clinical Urology at the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine where his research interests focused on improving pediatric surgical outcomes and access to care. He served as a physician lead during CHLA's ambulatory EMR deployment, clinical site lead at CHLA for the NIH-funded Southern California Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), and served on various committees ranging from revenue cycle optimization to data governance. He received his BS from Yale University and his MD from Cornell University Medical College. He completed his urology residency at the University of Southern California and his pediatric urology fellowship at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia where he completed a Master's of Science in Clinical Epidemiology (MSCE) from the University of Pennsylvania, and completed his MBA from the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business.



Michael Lunzer, Founder/CEO, Itiliti Health

Michael Lunzer is the Founder and CEO of Itiliti Health, Inc., where he drives innovation in healthcare by streamlining and automating prior authorization. A seasoned entrepreneur, Michael co-founded the first-ever technology-based vendor management system for the staffing industry, which processed \$2 billion annually by 2005. He also co-founded Warm Health, a virtual care manager platform for payers, later acquired by Change Healthcare. With a career focused on solving inefficiencies through technology, Michael continues to lead transformative change in healthcare, making him a sought-after speaker on industry innovation and optimization.



Michael Anne Kyle, Assistant Professor, University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine

Michael Anne Kyle is an assistant professor in the Department of Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the Perelman School of Medicine. She is interested in the interface of rapidly advancing biomedical discoveries and complex organizational bureaucracies. Her current work focuses on defining and measuring patient administrative burden in cancer care delivery, its organizational antecedents, and consequences for patient well-being and outcomes. She combines field research (e.g., interviews, surveys) and large administrative datasets (e.g., claims) to produce evidence in support of actionable organizational or policy targets for clinical leaders and policymakers.

Prior to joining MEHP, she completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Health Care Policy at Harvard Medical School, where her research was supported by a K99/R00 career development award. She earned her Ph.D. in Health Policy and Management at Harvard Business School, before which she received an MPH from the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health and an MSN from the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to her academic work, she remains a practicing critical care nurse.



Neil Kulkarni, VP Product Management - Provider & Clinical, Highmark Health

Neil Kulkarni is the Vice President of Product Management for Provider and Clinical Experience at Highmark Health. His teams are responsible for delivering and managing the capabilities to streamline and simplify the organization's Utilization Management, Care Management, and Provider supporting experiences. Prior to joining Highmark Health, Neil spent his career at Deloitte Consulting where he worked across several industries including healthcare, aerospace & defense, and retail & consumer products. He earned his MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth and completed his undergraduate degree in business from Emory University.



Jeff Wu, Deputy Director for Policy, Center for Consumer Information & Insurance Oversight (CCIIO) at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

Jeff Wu is the Deputy Director for Policy in CCIIO, where he leads policy and regulatory work on many of the Affordable Care Act health insurance reforms, including the Health Insurance Marketplaces (including SHOP), the premium stabilization programs, advance payments of the premium tax credit and cost-sharing reductions, the CO-OP program, regulation of qualified health plans, and eligibility and enrollment standards. He also leads the center's work promulgating policy and regulations for the No Surprises Act, including the independent dispute resolution process, consumer balance billing protections, and disclosure requirements. He oversees the center's communications, stakeholder outreach, and data analysis work, and serves as a member of the center's senior leadership team. He previously served in various policy positions at CCIIO, as an attorney at the law firm of Covington & Burling LLP, and as a management consultant with Oliver, Wyman & Company. He received an A.B. in economics from Harvard College, a J.D. from Stanford Law School, and an M.B.A. from Stanford Business School.



Jill DeGraff, Chief Privacy & Regulatory Officer, b.well Connected Health

Jill DeGraff is the Chief Privacy & Regulatory Officer for b.well Connected Health. Jill plays a central role in advancing b.well's regulatory, business, and product strategy, helping to build a model of industry best practices for the shoppable healthcare experience on open, consumer-centered standards, powered by the patient right of access, and dedicated to consumer privacy and data protection. Jill is an expert in health law and policy, privacy, data protection, commercial transactions, and health data interoperability. She brings a passion for regulation advancement to make healthcare simpler for consumers while providing them with tools to conveniently manage their healthcare journey.



Jeanne Pinder, Founder and CEO, ClearHealthCosts

Jeanne Pinder is founder and CEO of ClearHealthCosts, a journalism company working to build equitable access to healthcare by revealing prices and helping people deal with the complexities of the system.

On pricing information, ClearHealthCosts is like a mashup of Kayak and the Waze traffic app for health costs. Did you know that a simple MRI could cost \$300 or \$6,200 in the same metro area? Or that a common blood test could cost \$19 or \$522? Did you know that you might well pay less if you put away your insurance card and instead pay cash?

On healthcare access, it's a trusted source of information on how to navigate – how to get medications at a price you can afford, how to argue a bill, how to think about buying insurance policies or fight medical debt.

ClearHealthCosts has partnered with big media organizations and others, with funding from angel investors and with grants from the New York State Health Foundation; the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the International Women's Media Foundation (Ford Foundation funds), the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at Columbia University, the Tow-Knight Center for Entrepreneurial Journalism at the City University of New York, the Lenfest Institute and others.

Partners include CBS National News; KXAN-TV in Austin, Tex.; WNYC public radio in New York and Gothamist.com; Epicenter-NYC in New York; The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Daily News and Philly.com; NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune and WVUE Fox 8 Live in New Orleans; WLRN public radio in Miami; WUSF public radio in Tampa-St. Petersburg; KQED public radio in San Francisco; KPCC public radio in Los Angeles; and MedPage Today.

The company's journalism has won multiple prizes – they shared a 2023 “excellence in innovation” Edward R. Murrow award with their partners at KXAN-TV in Austin; they also shared a 2019 network public service gold from the Society for Professional Journalists-Sigma Delta Chi with their partners at CBS News. They were a finalist with partners for a Peabody, and won a 2017 Edward R. Murrow national award for continuing coverage,

a Society for Professional Journalists public service national gold medal for small-market television and numerous state and regional journalism awards.

They recently worked to accelerate Covid vaccine access in a Taskforce for Racial Inclusion and Equity neighborhood in New York City, so named because these neighborhoods suffered disproportionately from the effects of the pandemic. For this work they won the Digital Innovation national award for “Best Audience Listening Strategy” from the Local Media Association and the 2023 public service gold medal from LION Publishers, another nationwide journalism group.

Pinder worked at The New York Times as an editor, reporter and human resources executive for nearly 25 years. She took a buyout in 2009, and a year later won a shark-tank-type pitch contest at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism to found ClearHealthCosts.

She built the company into a leading national resource for health costs, saving people tons of money and also having policy impact: Their work was instrumental in getting consumer protection legislation passed in Louisiana, in getting transparency legislation passed in Texas, and in effecting administrative changes for the New York State surprise billing protections.

Her TED talk about health costs went viral, approaching 2 million views. She was a Russian major and did graduate work in Slavic linguistics and related studies at Indiana University and Leningrad State University in Leningrad, U.S.S.R., a place almost as opaque as the health care marketplace.



Tim Ferris, MD, Vice President, Healthcare Practice

Dr. Tim Ferris joined InterSystems in February 2026 as Vice President, Healthcare Practice. He brings decades of experience directing large-scale healthcare technology transformations and leading major physician organizations to drive better patient outcomes and enterprise efficiency.

Prior to joining InterSystems, Dr. Ferris served as President of Healthcare at Red Cell Partners, a technology incubator and investment firm. Previously, he was the National Director of Transformation at England's National Health Service (NHS), as well as CEO and Chair of the Massachusetts General Physicians Organization and Senior Vice President for Population Health at Mass General Brigham.

A recognized leader in health IT, Dr. Ferris' advisory roles include multiple committees at the National Academy of Medicine and the health policy advisory board at the Stanford University School of Medicine. Dr. Ferris trained in medicine and public health at Harvard University and continues to lecture at Harvard Business School and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.