

MCKIMMON CENTER

PARKING

Parking in the front lots of the McKimmon Center is free and usually plentiful. There are three smaller parking lots on each side of the Center that are reserved for university employees. Visitors are asked to park in designated visitor parking spaces in order to avoid ticketing.

WIFI INFORMATION

NC State University has a free guest Wi-Fi account called `ncsu_guest`. Go to the wi-fi settings for your computer, select `ncsu_guest`, and click on "I agree" to the left of the wolf.

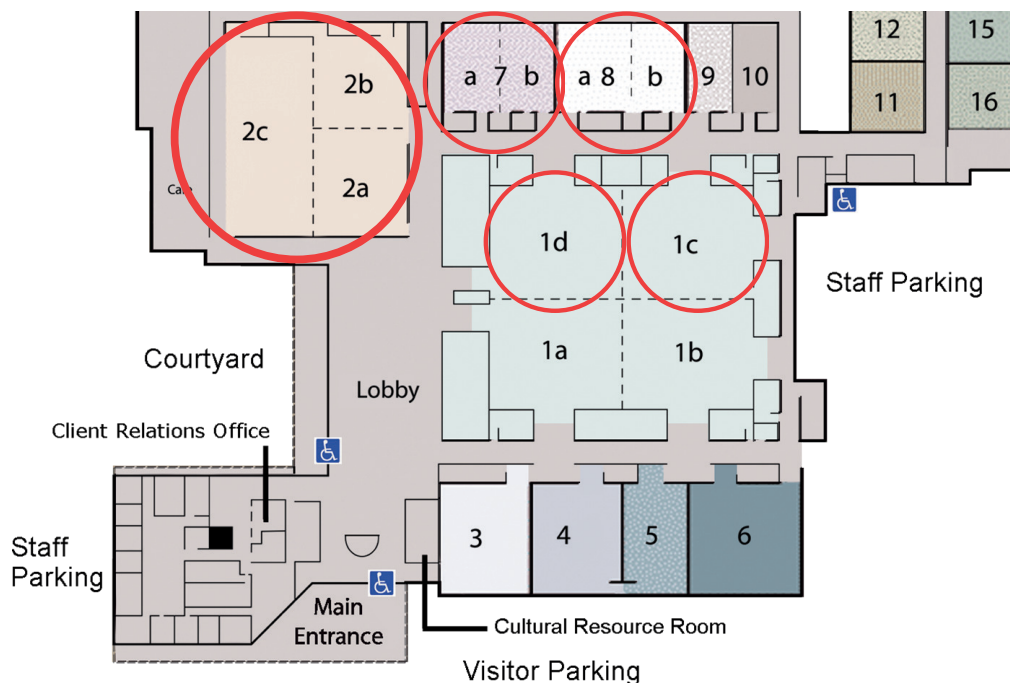
IN-PERSON CONSIDERATIONS

We recognize some attendees may feel more comfortable wearing a mask. Weather permitting, you are welcome to eat breakfast or lunch outside in the courtyard area.

SESSION LOCATIONS

The large sessions will take place in room 2. Coffee, hot water for tea, and water will be available throughout the day in room 2. Breakout sessions will take place in 1c, 1d, 7, and 8.

The cafe and lobby areas are good locations if you need to take a quick call or want to connect with someone in a smaller space.



2024 NCIOM ANNUAL MEETING

LOBBY

beginning at 8:00 am

REGISTRATION

ROOM 2

8:00 - 9:00 am

NETWORKING BREAKFAST

Assorted muffins, mini burritos, fruit, coffee, hot water, and tea

PLENARY SESSIONS

9:00 - 9:15 am

WELCOME

Michelle Ries, MPH, President and CEO, North Carolina Institute of Medicine

Adam Sholar, JD, Chair of the Board of Directors, North Carolina Institute of Medicine and President and CEO, North Carolina Health Care Facilities Association

9:15 - 10:00 am

KEYNOTE:

Investing in Direct Care Workers: A Critical Step Toward a Sustainable Long-Term Care System

Join us for an engaging keynote, where we will explore the critical importance of investing in direct care workers (DCWs) as a cornerstone of a sustainable long-term care system. Through compelling narratives, the Robert Espinoza, MPA, CEO of the National Skills Coalition and Board Chair of the American Society on Aging, will emphasize the urgent need for collective action to address the challenges facing this essential workforce. Attendees will gain valuable insights into how supporting DCWs not only enhances the quality of care but also strengthens our communities and economy. Together, we will discuss transformative policy solutions that can elevate the direct care workforce and ensure a resilient framework for long-term services and supports for all.

Robert Espinoza, MPA, CEO of the National Skills Coalition and Board Chair of the American Society on Aging

Robert Espinoza, MPA, is a prominent advocate and thought leader in the fields of workforce, aging, and caregiving. As CEO of the National Skills Coalition, Robert promotes access to inclusive, high-quality skills training so that more people have access to a better life, and more local businesses see sustained growth. Prior to his role at the National Skills Coalition, Robert served as the Executive Vice President of Policy at PHI, the nation's foremost organization focused on the direct care workforce. For nearly a decade, he directed the organization's award-winning national advocacy, research, and public education division. Under his leadership, the division produced over 100 original publications and launched multiple high-profile national and state-based initiatives. Since 2023, he has hosted *A Question of Care*, an award-winning podcast exploring the many challenges facing our country's caregiving system.

Robert was selected for the inaugural CARE100 list in 2020, recognizing him as one of the most forward-thinking individuals reshaping the landscape of caregiving in America. Robert also serves as board chair for the American Society on Aging.

Room 2 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

PLENARY PANEL:

Ensuring Robust Long-Term Services and Supports for a Changing State

Join us for an insightful plenary panel that addresses the essential need for robust long-term services and supports (LTSS) in North Carolina amid shifting demographics and evolving community needs. Moderated by Dr. Paul L. Delamater, this session will feature expert panelists who will delve into the complexities of LTSS, including the challenges of access, capacity, and integration of services across the lifespan. Attendees will gain valuable perspectives on the importance of informal caregivers, data challenges, and policy changes aimed at enhancing care for individuals transitioning between settings. This discussion will highlight opportunities for improving LTSS delivery and empower policymakers and families with essential knowledge to navigate this intricate landscape effectively.

Moderated by Paul L. Delamater, PhD, Faculty Fellow, Sheps Center for Health Services Research and Associate Professor of Geography, UNC Chapel Hill

Dr. Paul Delamater is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography, a Fellow of the Carolina Population Center, and a Fellow of the Sheps Center for Health Services Research at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In his research, Dr. Delamater uses geographic information systems (GIS) and statistical/spatial analysis to study access to and utilization of health care services. For nearly 15 years, he has worked with the Michigan Certificate of Need Commission to develop data-driven approaches to predict future need for health care services across the state.

Erin Kent, PhD, MS, Associate Professor and Associate Chair for Research in Health Policy and Management, Gillings School of Global Public Health, UNC Chapel Hill

Erin E. Kent, PhD, MS, FSBM is an Associate Professor and Associate Chair for Research in Health Policy and Management at the UNC Chapel Hill Gillings School of Global Public Health. Her disciplinary background is in epidemiology and health services research. She is a full Member of Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center and a Health Services Research Fellow at the Cecil G. Sheps Center. She currently serves as the Chair of the Caregiving Research SIG for the American Psychosocial Oncology Society. Her mission is to develop and implement into practice serious illness supportive care interventions and to conduct research that informs the development of policies that support individuals with serious illness, aging-related impairments, and disabilities, as well as their family caregivers. In partnership with UNC Sheps, she is leading the development of a data dashboard and data-driven implementation plan to accompany the North Carolina Multisector Plan for Aging.

Sabrena Lea, BS, Deputy Director, NC Medicaid and LTSS, Division of Health Benefits, NC Department of Health and Human Services

Tracy Hayes, JD, CHC, Area Director and Chief Executive Officer, Vaya Health

As Area Director and Chief Executive Officer of Vaya Health, Tracy Hayes leads the executive team and oversees general administration and daily business activities, including the recent launch of Vaya's Behavioral Health and I/DD Tailored Plan, Vaya Total Care. As a former Medicaid beneficiary and recipient of public welfare programs, she has a passion for service that ensures a steadfast focus on the people and communities Vaya is privileged to serve.

Ms. Hayes brings nearly 20 years of experience with North Carolina's Medicaid and State-funded programs to the role of Area Director and CEO. She obtained her undergraduate degree from New College of Florida and her juris doctorate from Tulane University Law School, is nationally certified in healthcare compliance, and licensed to practice law in North Carolina. Prior to accepting the CEO role, she served as Vaya's General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer since 2013, leading multiple complex initiatives and progressively larger business units, including the legal, compliance, quality management, regulatory affairs, board operations, and communications teams.

Prior to joining Vaya in 2013, Ms. Hayes served as Special Deputy Attorney General at the N.C. Department of Justice, representing the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. Her work on civil, administrative, and policy matters related to the N.C. Medicaid program provided opportunities to gain valuable insight and build strong relationships with stakeholders throughout the state. Ms. Hayes also served as the first General Counsel for Alliance Health, another North Carolina LME/MCO operating out of the Triangle area.

11:00 - 11:15 am

BREAK

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Pathways to Strengthening the Direct Care Workforce

Room 1D | 11:15 am - 12:15 pm

This panel discussion will focus on the direct care workforce, a vital component of our long-term services and supports system. Our expert panelists will explore pressing issues such as wage disparities, structural challenges, and the role of family caregivers in providing essential care. With insights from leaders across the sector, including workforce development initiatives and the unique perspectives of direct care workers, this session will highlight both the challenges and opportunities within the field. Attendees will leave with actionable insights and strategies to support and elevate the direct care workforce for a sustainable future.

Moderated by Andy MacCracken, MPA, Director, NC Center on the Workforce for Health, NC AHEC

Andy MacCracken is the inaugural director of the NC Center on the Workforce for Health. In that role, he leads collaborative efforts to develop and deploy statewide strategies that tackle today's severe health workforce shortages and prepare for the future. Andy joined the Center from the NC Pandemic Recovery Office, where he drove policy and research initiatives and managed \$200 million in programs supporting the state's education, workforce, and health needs. He previously cofounded and served as executive director of a national postsecondary education policy organization. Andy has an MPA and BA, both from American University in Washington, DC. He serves on the boards of directors of the Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle and the KJS Legacy Project.

Trish Farnham, JD, MPA, Coordinator of Essential Jobs, Essential Care-NC, NC Coalition on Aging

Trish Farnham is with the NC Coalition on Aging and coordinates Essential Jobs, Essential Care-NC. EJE is a cross-sector collaboration of direct care workforce advocates, service providers, trade associations, and individuals with lived experience that advocate for improved systemic supports of NC's direct care and support workforce. She has been a member of the aging and disability communities for over 30 years, working in both the public and private sectors and serving in various capacities, including as a direct care worker and a family caregiver.

Kezia Scales, PhD, Vice President of Research & Evaluation, PHI

Kezia Scales, PhD, is the Vice President of Research & Evaluation at PHI, a national organization committed to promoting quality direct care jobs as the foundation of quality care for older adults and people with disabilities and serious illness. A long-time, dedicated direct care workforce researcher and advocate, Kezia now leads PHI's strategy for building the evidence base on state and national policies and workforce interventions that improve direct care jobs, elevate this essential workforce, and strengthen care processes and outcomes. Kezia works from her backyard "tiny office" in Durham, NC.

Denise Lugo, CNA, Home Health Aide, Progressive Home Health Care

For over 30 years, Denise has played many roles within the direct care workforce in Texas and North Carolina. Most recently, she is a CNA home health aide and has stayed in direct care because of her passion for caring for older adults.

Improving Delivery and Experience of Care

Room 7 | 11:15 am - 12:15 pm

Join us for a dynamic discussion on the evolving landscape of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) in North Carolina. This session will explore the current challenges and opportunities within the LTSS system, focusing on the experiences of service providers, caregivers, and individuals receiving care. The panel will cover key topics such as innovative trends in LTSS, the importance of cultivating a culture of dedication to residents and families, and strategies for addressing workforce shortages. The discussion will also highlight barriers to effective care delivery, including staff retention challenges, and provide insights on how to improve the system for those who rely on these services. Attendees will gain valuable perspectives on the policy, cultural, and operational changes needed to enhance LTSS delivery and ensure sustainability for the future.

Moderated by Corye Dunn, JD, Director of Public Policy, Disability Rights NC

Corye Dunn joined DRNC in 2011 as the agency's director of public policy. Dunn, who was born and raised in Durham, N.C., graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill and NC Central University School of Law. Prior to working at DRNC, Dunn practiced law in a small firm. She also served as a direct care provider to adults and children with developmental disabilities and worked in nonprofits seeking to expand access to education and increase investment in low-wealth communities.

Ted Goins, BA, President and CEO, Lutheran Services Carolinas

Ted W. Goins, Jr. is president/CEO of Lutheran Services Carolinas, and an advocate for health/human services clients and caregivers. Goins graduated from Lenoir-Rhyne University, earned a master's at Pfeiffer University, and has served through LSC since 1990. He began as a nursing assistant in 1978, was certified for twenty years, and has been a nursing home administrator since 1982. Goins is Chair of the Board of the North Carolina Health Care Facilities Association and board member of Portico Benefit Services.

Julie Ghurtskaia, RN, MPA, Vice President, Population Health, Carolina Complete Health

A Registered Nurse with over 26 years of experience, Julie Ghurtskaia is Carolina Complete Health's Vice President of Population Health. She has a unique skill set developed through clinical and non-clinical experience in hospitals and health plans in the United States and abroad. Carolina Complete Health is part of the Centene Corporation, a Fortune 25 company and the largest provider of government-sponsored health insurance in the United States, covering over 26 million Americans across 50 states with Medicaid, Medicare Advantage, and Marketplace.

Ghurtskaia leads Carolina Complete Health's Population Health department, supporting care management, utilization management, health equity, community outreach, transition of care, and plan benefits for over 270,000 Medicaid Managed Care members in North Carolina. Previously, Ghurtskaia served in executive and leadership roles at Centene Corporation. She holds a Master in Public Health from the University of Southern Mississippi and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from William Carey University.

Navigating the Caregiving Journey: Tools for Family and Community Support

Room 8 | 11:15 am - 12:15 pm

Join us for a session focused on the critical role of caregivers in our communities and the support systems available to them. Our expert panel will share insights from diverse perspectives, including active caregivers, gerontology specialists, and aging services professionals. Key topics will include the unique challenges faced by family caregivers, particularly in rural areas, and the importance of culturally relevant support programs for diverse populations.

Moderated by Mark Hensley, MA, Associate State Director, AARP NC

North Carolina aging and caregiving expert Mark Hensley has joined AARP North Carolina as Associate State Director for Community Outreach and Advocacy in the Triad Region. Hensley previously coordinated North Carolina's Alzheimer's and dementia services for the NC Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Aging and Adult Services (DHHS), where he led efforts to implement NC's first Alzheimer's State Plan including the development of Dementia-Capable Communities across the state. Prior to this post, he served as State Director for Project C.A.R.E (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty) which is a statewide program offering counseling, care management services and respite care to caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias.

Julian Montoro-Rodriguez, PhD, Professor of Sociology and Gerontology, School of Social Work, UNC Charlotte

Dr. Montoro-Rodriguez is a sociologist with a teaching and research background in the area of aging, health, human development and family studies. He is interested in testing theoretically based interventions designed to help family caregivers to reduce stress, depression, and burden to improve the quality of life of older adults and their families. His research examines the interrelations between formal and informal support systems and optimal adaptation to developmental changes among diverse older adults. Currently a professor of Sociology, Gerontology and Social Work at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, NC USA. Board member of the Foundation for Health Leadership and Innovation since 2020.

Amanda Biggs, Specialist, Project C.A.R.E. ("Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty"), Mid-East Commission Area Agency on Aging

Amanda V. Biggs is the Project C.A.R.E. Family Consultant with the Mid-East Commission Area Agency on Aging, supporting 29 counties in the NORTHEASTERN Region, for the state of North Carolina. Amanda is a National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioner (NCCDP) and has obtained the Certification in Advance Clinical Dementia Practices from the University Of Michigan. She has over 27 years of experience in working with care partners and their loved one who lives with dementia. She is also a Virtual Dementia Tour Facilitator & Trainer and a Positive Approach To Care (PAC) Independent Trainer. She chairs the Pitt Defeats Dementia Committee of community partners in Pitt County and also Facilitates a monthly Caregiver Support Group Meeting at the Pitt County Council on Aging. She's very passionate about the senior population and strive to make a difference in their lives every day, while supporting their care partners with dementia specific education and trainings!

Steve Freedman, Caregiver and Former Service Operations Section Chief, NC Division of Aging

Retired from state government in 2023 after a 50 year career working with DHHS - Division of Aging in a number of management positions including Chief, Service Operations Section which included supervising/managing a number of caregiver support programs including Project CARE- Alzheimer's/ dementia respite care program, Family Caregiver Support program, respite for older adults and their families, and certification of Adult Day Care and Adult Day Health programs. Participated on 2015-2016 IOM Alzheimer's/Dementia task force and the first state plan to address issues with this disability.

Session for members and staff of the NCGA: *Investing in a sustainable long-term care system with Robert Espinoza, MPA*

Room 1C | 11:15 am - 12:15 pm

This invitation-only session will bring together members of the North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) and their staff for an engaging discussion with our keynote speaker, Robert Espinoza, MPA.

Robert Espinoza, MPA, is a prominent advocate and thought leader in the fields of workforce, aging, and caregiving. As CEO of the National Skills Coalition, Robert promotes access to inclusive, high-quality skills training so that more people have access to a better life, and more local businesses see sustained growth. Prior to his role at the National Skills Coalition, Robert served as the Executive Vice President of Policy at PHI, the nation's foremost organization focused on the direct care workforce. For nearly a decade, he directed the organization's award-winning national advocacy, research, and public education division. Under his leadership, the division produced over 100 original publications and launched multiple high-profile national and state-based initiatives. Since 2023, he has hosted *A Question of Care*, an award-winning podcast exploring the many challenges facing our country's caregiving system.

Robert was selected for the inaugural CARE100 list in 2020, recognizing him as one of the most forward-thinking individuals reshaping the landscape of caregiving in America. Robert also serves as board chair for the American Society on Aging.

LUNCH & NETWORKING

ROOM 2

12:15 - 1:20 pm

Lunch buffet includes grilled chicken, steak kabobs, falafel, basmati rice, baked veggies, Greek salad, hummus, tzatziki, and baklava. Allergy and dietary restriction-specific information from Jasmin And Olivz (caterer):

Gluten Free:

- chicken and beef kabobs
- rice and vegetables
- hummus and tzatziki
- falafel
- Greek salad

Lactose free:

- beef kabobs
- rice and vegetables
- hummus and pita
- falafel

Kosher:

- everything

Vegan:

- vegetables
- hummus and pita
- falafel

Vegetarian:

- vegetables
- hummus and tzatziki
- falafel and pita
- Greek salad
- Baklava

Nut Allergy:

- SKIP Baklava
- Hummus might have traces of nuts

Banana, corn, cucumber, melon allergy:

- SKIP Greek salad (contains cucumbers)

Oregano:

- SKIP Salad Dressing and Vegetables

Nightshade allergy: There is a special box of food for you; please see NCIOM staff or caterers

We don't use corn, oats, kiwi, pork, eggs and shellfish/seafood

Please join us at 12:50 for remarks from **Susan Mims, MD, MPH, FAAP**, President & CEO of the Dogwood Health Trust, and the **WNC Bridge Foundation** regarding Hurricane Helene response in Western NC.

1:20 - 1:30 pm

BREAK

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Innovations in Funding & Financing Long-Term Services and Supports

Room 1D | 1:30 - 2:30 pm

This session will explore the latest innovations in funding and financing models for long-term services and supports (LTSS). Panelists will provide valuable insights into new payment strategies, including the impact of family caregiving, intra-household decision-making, and the role of home- and community-based services. Experts from a range of sectors, including academic research, healthcare policy, and advocacy, will discuss how to better support family caregivers and optimize care for individuals with long-term needs. Attendees will gain an understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the financial landscape of LTSS and explore innovative solutions to ensure sustainability and equity in care delivery.

Moderated by Courtney Van Houtven, PhD, Professor, The Department of Population Health Science, Duke University School of Medicine and Duke-Margolis Institute for Health Policy

Courtney Van Houtven, PhD, MSc, is Professor of Medicine in the Department of Population Health Science at Duke University School of Medicine and a Research Career Scientist at the Center of Innovation to Accelerate Discovery and Practice Transformation (ADAPT), Durham Veterans Affairs Health Care System. Her research focuses on long-term care policies and economics of aging, especially care at home. She strives to identify pragmatic trials, care models, and policies that optimize the ability of people with care needs to age in place while at the same time supporting their family and friend caregivers.

Alicia Stokes, MHA, Vice President, Strategy, Planning & Performance, Government Markets, Blue Cross NC

As the Vice President, Strategy Planning and Performance, Government Markets, Alicia is accountable for Blue Cross NC's Government Markets' go to market strategy, market performance, marketing strategy, product and performance innovation, and portfolio delivery. This includes Medicare, Medicaid, and the Federal Employee Program. Prior to that, she was the Director of Insights & Innovation at Blue Cross NC, where she was responsible for helping drive the company's enterprise strategy and providing strategic counsel to the organization's leadership team. In this role, Alicia's teams synthesized and delivered relevant market and competitive intelligence insights to Blue Cross NC leadership, and driving the company's enterprise innovation practice.

Prior to coming to Blue Cross NC, she worked at a large academic medical center in NC for almost a decade, where she primarily focused on working with providers to design and implement team based population health strategies that included primary care physicians, specialists, community resources, and a range of other players across the healthcare continuum—all committed to practicing coordinated, high quality, patient centered care to yield the best outcomes. Alicia believes that the future of healthcare hinges on the collaborative efforts of thought leaders across the ecosystem placing a strict focus on affordability, quality, health outcomes, and an exceptional experience. Her prior experience working with providers is critical to helping Blue Cross NC lead the charge to transform the healthcare system.

William E. Lamb, MSW, MPA, Executive Committee Member, Friends of Residents in Long Term Care

In 2011, Bill retired after a 40-year career working in The Department of Health and Human Services and The UNC Institute on Aging. He now remains actively involved in aging-related advocacy in North Carolina. He serves on the board of Friends of Residents in Long Term Care as chair of their public policy committee. He also serves as the Wake County delegate to the Senior Tarheel Legislature, a member of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Aging, The Center for Excellence in Assisted Living, and most recently on the leadership team for development of North Carolina's Master Plan on Aging.

Advancing Home- and Community-Based Services: Solutions for Access and Equity

Room 7 | 1:30 - 2:30 pm

This session will bring together a panel of experts to discuss the landscape of home- and community-based services (HCBS) in North Carolina. Panelists will explore the different services under HCBS, including PACE, hospice, home health, and more, while addressing key challenges such as provider access, policy barriers, and the transition between services. Through real-world insights from families, providers, and policy advocates, this conversation will highlight opportunities for improving access to quality care for individuals with complex needs and the role of community-based services in keeping individuals out of institutional care. Attendees will hear about pressing issues, policy solutions, and the need for greater education and collaboration to enhance HCBS delivery across the state.

Moderated by Shannon Pointer, DNP, RN, CHPN, Senior Vice President of Hospice and Home Health Services and Professional Development Director, Association for Home & Hospice Care of North Carolina (AHC)

Shannon Pointer, DNP, RN, CHPN has over 20 years of experience in nursing, within a variety of clinic, health system, school-based and community settings. Shannon obtained her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree through The University of North Carolina at Charlotte in December, 2021. Shannon also previously completed a Nurse Educator Graduate Certificate and a Master of Science in Nursing with a major in Nursing Systems/Populations and concentration in Community and Public Health Nursing from The University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She obtained her undergraduate Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and her ADN from Alamance Community College.

Shannon began her work within the community/public health field as a school nurse in 2004 where she learned the importance and value of good communication, collaboration and strong interdisciplinary teamwork. Shannon then entered the home health, hospice and palliative care field in 2013. Prior to employment with AHC, Shannon served as the Director of Facility Team for Hospice & Palliative Care Center of Alamance-Caswell who merged with Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro. Shannon has special interests in advance care planning, advance care directives and Veterans outreach and education.

Jenny Hobbs, BS, Board Chair, Advocates for Medically Fragile Kids NC

Jenny calls North Carolina home, having lived in Winston-Salem for 25 years. She graduated from Wake Forest University with a Bachelor of Science in Health and Exercise Science. Jenny worked as a CAP/C social work case manager before focusing her energy on Advocates for Medically Fragile Kids NC. As one of its co-founders, Jenny is determined to ensure that services and supports remain available for all families who need them. She serves on several state boards including NC Medicaid's MCAC and Olmstead Plan Stakeholder Advisory. Jenny has 3 medically fragile children herself who drive her passion for this work.

Lee Dobson, MPA, CPHQ, Deputy Executive Director, BAYADA Hearts for Home Care

Lee Dobson, MPA, CPHQ, is the Deputy Executive Director of BAYADA Hearts for Home Care (a social welfare advocacy org). Lee is an experienced healthcare executive with over 30 years in home and community-based services focused on government affairs, public policy, and grassroots advocacy. She works at the state and federal-level to help seniors, children and adults living with disabilities and medical complexities get the home care services they need. She also works to preserve the jobs of dedicated front-line workers who may this care possible. As part of a team who understands the importance of advocating for and educating on the value of home care and hospice, Lee works to improve access to high-quality care at home.

Ursula Robinson, MSW, Executive Director and Program Director, Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) of the Triad

Ursula Robinson is the founding President & CEO of PACE of the Triad, located in Greensboro, NC. PACE is an acronym for Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly. Under Ursula's leadership, PACE of the Triad has grown to be the third largest PACE program in NC. PACE employees over 100 employees, and volunteers. PACE contracts with approximately (250) acute, long-term care and medical specialist to serve participants in the program. The organization is expanding to Winston-Salem in 2025.

Prior to PACE, Ursula was employed with Authoracare for eighteen years in various progressive leadership roles. She currently serves on the Boards of Directors: Cone Health Foundation, NC PACE Association, National PACE Association, LeadingAge-National and Thornwell institute for abused and troubled children. Ursula has a master's degree in health care administration from Pfeiffer University and a master's degree in social Worker from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Rural Issues in Long-Term Services and Supports – Discussions to foster collaboration and policy opportunities

Room 1C | 1:30 - 2:30 pm

TABLE 1 - Caregiver Support

This discussion will focus on the critical need for caregiver support in rural communities, where resources are often scarce and access to services is limited. Panelists will explore the importance of support groups that provide both emotional and practical assistance to caregivers, especially in rural areas. The conversation will highlight creative community-driven solutions, such as food distribution and support services, that aim to meet the needs of caregivers in underserved populations. Attendees will explore how policy solutions can help replicate these models across North Carolina to provide more comprehensive and accessible support to caregivers in rural communities.

Facilitated by Angela Caraway, MBA, Founder and Executive Director, Caraway Foundation and Mayor of Ansonville, NC

Angela Caraway, a native of Anson County, NC, is the Founder and President of The Caraway Management Group, Inc. (TCMG) and the Founder and Executive Director of The Caraway Foundation, in Ansonville, NC. The Caraway Foundation (TCF) provides support in the areas of life skills, financial empowerment and professional development assistance for under-served populations. In addition, the Foundation focuses on resources such as refurbished computers, food access, and transportation services to support those in need. Angela has been the recipient of several awards for the work she is doing in her community. The NC Rural Center named Angela as the 2023 North Carolina Community Advocate of the Year; the Andrea Harris Phenomenal Woman Award; Anson County Chamber of Commerce Henry W. Little III Community Leadership Award, just to name a few. Angela wants every person in Anson County to have ALL the opportunities that are available to them and for them to excel. Angela has a strong love for people and most of all, Anson County. So much so, she decided to run for mayor of the Town of Ansonville in November 2023 and became the first African-American woman to be the mayor of Ansonville. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree with a concentration in Communication from NC State University and has completed her course work to receive an MBA with a concentration in Marketing from Strayer University. Currently she resides in Ansonville, NC.

TABLE 2 - Food Access and Nutrition Support

Explore the connection between food access and long-term care in rural communities, with an emphasis on how food deserts, financial limitations, and transportation barriers affect the ability of older adults and individuals with disabilities to access nutritious meals.

Facilitated by Carolyn Bird, PhD, AFC, RFC, William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor and Family Resource Management Specialist, NC State University

Dr. Carolyn Bird is a Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Human Sciences at North Carolina State University. She is a member of the Graduate Studies Committee, conducts applied research, and develops train-the-trainer programming for non-formal education settings.

Her scholarship uses a quality-of-life lens to examine leadership in educational settings, families embedded in communities, and older adult experiences. In relation to older adults, Dr. Bird is a member of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging and serves as chair for its Communication and Digital Equity Committee. She also serves on the NC Institute of Medicine's Healthy Aging Task Force.

TABLE 3 - Workforce Challenges and Solutions

Discuss the current state and future preparedness of the rural workforce in NC for delivering long-term services and support. This table will focus on workforce development, retention, and addressing gaps due to worker displacement.

Facilitated by Kimberly Delgado, PhD, RN, CDP, CADDCT, Clinical Assistant Professor, East Carolina University

Dr. Delgado is a Clinical Assistant Professor and Research Nurse at East Carolina University's (ECU) College of Nursing (CON). Her research foci include dementia care and nursing staff identification of urinary tract infections in skilled nursing facilities.

Dr. Delgado is one of three ECU CON team members on the Carolina Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) grant. As a Certified Dementia Practitioner, Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Trainer, and Positive Approach to Care Trainer, with over 20 years of long-term care experience, she shares her expertise related to dementia care, care of older adults, and long-term care throughout eastern NC.

2:30 - 2:45 pm

BREAK

CLOSING SESSIONS

ROOM 2

2:45 - 3:30 pm

NC's Multisector Plan for Aging: All Ages, All Stages

Jill Simmerman Lawrence, MPH, Deputy Director, Division of Aging

Mary Bethel, MEd, Chair, NC Coalition on Aging's Board of Directors

3:30 - 3:50 pm

What's Next From NCIOM and Closing Remarks

Michelle Ries, MPH, President and CEO, North Carolina Institute of Medicine

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