



Welcome and Leadership Introduction

Kellie Rodriguez, RN, MSN, MBA, CDCES is actively involved with the Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists (ADCES) at a national, state and local level – Director, National Board of Directors since 2017, and is the 2021 President. At a State level, immediate past co-chair and finance leader for the ADCES Texas Coordinating Body. Past committee roles include the National Conference Planning Committee and Professional Practice Committee. Past National Chair (2014) and board member (2011-2015) of the Board of Directors of the Certification Board for Diabetes Care & Education (CBDCE).

Employed as the Director, Global Diabetes Program at Parkland Health & Hospital System in Dallas, Texas. Responsible for building an effective and creative system of care delivery, to advance diabetes care and education within Parkland’s hospital, specialty and primary care clinics and the broader Dallas community. Kellie has over 20 years of diabetes care, education and program management experience. Completed her Executive MBA in Health Sector Management and Policy at the University of Miami, Florida and has a Master’s in Nursing and graduate studies in Diabetes Education from Melbourne, Australia. Professional reputation for being passionate, focused, collaborative and outcome driven. Kellie treasures the multi-disciplinary richness of the diabetes care team, always seeking opportunities to advance diabetes care and the specialty practice through innovative and creative care models and solutions.

ADCES Advocacy Overview and Legislative Training

Kate Thomas, MA is the Chief Advocacy and External Affairs Officer at the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists (ADCES). Kate oversees the development and implementation of ADCES’ public policy program, federal regulatory and legislative initiatives, and state advocacy priorities. She works to cultivate relationships with ADCES members and volunteer leaders, policymakers, corporate partners, and external stakeholders to advance policies that improve access to care for people with diabetes and those at risk for diabetes. Kate is as a co-chair of the Diabetes Advocacy Alliance. Prior to joining ADCES, Kate served as the Senior Director of Advocacy and Reimbursement at the American Academy of Audiology and received the President’s Award in 2016 for her work at that organization. Kate previously worked in the areas of scientific affairs and government relations at the College of American Pathologists. Kate resides in Chicago, IL.

Washington Public Policy Update

Sheila Burke, MPA, RN, FAAN is a member of the faculty at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She also serves as chair of the public policy group at Baker Donelson. From 2000-2007 she served as Under Secretary and then Deputy Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. From 1996-2000 she was executive dean at the Kennedy School. Ms. Burke was Chief of Staff to Senator Bob Dole (R Ks.) from 1986-1996, when he was Senate Minority and then Majority Leader. In 1995, she was also elected Secretary

of the U. S. Senate. As deputy staff director of the Senate Finance Committee, 1982-1985, Ms. Burke was responsible for legislation relating to Medicare, Medicaid, and other health programs. She served as a member of the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission from 2000 – 2007. She is a member of the National Academy of Medicine, a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and the American Academy of Social Insurance and serves on a number of boards including the Commonwealth Fund and Chubb Insurance. Early in her career, she was a staff nurse in Berkeley, CA.

Tiffani V. Williams, JD, MPH is senior vice president and public policy advisor with The Daschle Group, A Public Policy Advisory of Baker Donelson, and of counsel with Baker Donelson. Tiffani concentrates her practice on regulatory and legislative matters relating to the provision of health care services. Tiffani represents various segments of the health care industry, including hospitals, health care practitioners, independent clinical laboratories, health plans, pharmaceutical and device manufacturers, dialysis providers, trade associations and industry coalitions. She counsels clients on a variety of health-related issues, including Medicare coverage, coding and reimbursement, compliance with HIPAA/HITECH Act privacy and security regulations and fraud and abuse statutes, health information technology, prevention and wellness efforts, and health care reform policies, rules and regulations. On these issues, she deals directly with Congress, as well as the administration and executive Branch agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services, including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. She also assists health care clients with comments to various proposed and final federal agency regulations, and regularly prepares health care advisories, trending reports and position papers for clients.

In addition to advising clients on complex health care policy and regulatory matters, Tiffani also represents clients on food and nutrition security policy and regulatory issues, and emerging trends impacting the food and agriculture industries.

Advocating for Systems-Level Changes in Diabetes Policy

George Huntley is a founding member of the Diabetes Leadership Council (DLC) and currently volunteers as the Chief Executive Officer of both the DLC and its affiliate, the Diabetes Patient Advocacy Coalition. He has been living with type 1 diabetes since 1983 and has 3 other family members also living with type 1. A passionate advocate for people with diabetes, George served as the National Chair of the Board of the American Diabetes Association (ADA) in 2009 and led the ADA's Task Force on Health Care Reform in 2008 which led to their position statement providing input into the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. George is also the Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer and health plan administrator for Theoris Group, Inc., a professional services firm headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, that provides technology solutions and software development services.

Erika Emerson is the Executive Director of the Diabetes Leadership Council and brings to the role more than 20 years of experience as a health policy wonk and advocate. Her understanding of the biopharmaceutical industry and U.S. health care system lend insight to state and federal policies impacting access, quality and value of care and coverage for people with diabetes. Erika's health policy and patient advocacy experience is rooted in behavioral and mental health. A serendipitous introduction to the diabetes community sparked a heart-and-mind connection that expanded Erika's policy interests and personal passion for patient-centered, individualized approaches to chronic disease care and coverage.

Improving Coverage for Diabetes Technology

Tim Trysla is the Executive Director of the Diabetes Technology Access Coalition and a partner on the Health Care Team at Alston & Bird. Tim has nearly 20 years of health care policy experience in the private sector and executive and legislative branches of government. He served as senior policy advisor to the administrator at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). In addition to advising the administrator on matters of Medicare and Medicaid policy, he worked as a liaison for CMS to the White House and Congress on Medicare reform and prescription drug coverage issues. He served as administrator-designee and speechmaker to large medical specialty and beneficiary groups and helped manage the development, passage, and implementation the Medicare Part D program. Tim has experience counseling clients on numerous regulatory and transactional health care matters and investigations, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement, and legislative strategy. He represents a diverse group of clients, including hospitals, investment banks, medical device manufacturers, PBMs, long-term care pharmacies, diagnostic suppliers, and durable medical equipment manufacturers.

Policy Considerations at the Intersection of Diabetes and Cardiometabolic Health

Ryan Gough is the Executive Director of the Partnership to Advance Cardiovascular Health (PACH), a 501(c)4 nonprofit coalition of cardiometabolic patient and provider groups that work together to influence policy that impacts access to care. PACH focuses on policy issues both broad and narrow, from access to care to burdensome utilization management practices that impede the patient-clinician relationship. As cardiovascular medicine has increasingly become intertwined with other disease states, PACH has worked to highlight the comorbidities of cardiovascular disease and provide policy solutions that promote patient-centered care for patients managing multiple conditions.

Advocacy Tools You Can Use

Ann Constance, RDN, MA, CDCES, FADCES is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, Exercise Physiologist and Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist; she is also a Master Trainer for the diabetes self-management education program and a diabetes prevention life coach. Currently she serves as the Director of the Upper Peninsula Diabetes Outreach Network (UPDON); UPDON been nationally recognized for improving care and outcomes for people living with diabetes across the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. In addition, Ann serves the roles of the Chair of the ADCES Advocacy Committee. Much of Ann's work consists of forming innovative partnerships to identify and address ways to improve detection, prevention, and treatment of diabetes across the rural and remote 15 county region of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.