

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

“Rural Health: Laying the Foundation for Health Reform”

Tom Irons, MD is a professor of pediatrics, Brody School of Medicine, and associate vice chancellor for health sciences, East Carolina University. He is a graduate of Davidson College and the University Of North Carolina School Of Medicine. From 1975 to 1978, he served in the United States Army in West Germany, and practiced pediatrics in Raleigh, NC from 1978-1981. He joined the faculty of the ECU (now Brody) School of Medicine in 1981 and has continued an active teaching practice since that time. In 1999, he founded HealthAssist, a health improvement and health care program for low-income and uninsured residents of Eastern North Carolina. Beginning in 2005, he spearheaded the construction of the James D. Bernstein Community Health Center, and now serves as its medical director. The center provides comprehensive medical, dental, and behavioral health services, pharmacy, and a broad range of educational programs for community members and health professionals. In 2008, he was honored by the UNC Medical Alumni Association with its Distinguished Service Award. Dr Irons serves on a number of state and national boards.

Keith J. Mueller, Ph.D., is chair and professor of health services research and administration in the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, where he is also the director of the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis. He has served as president of the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) and as a member of the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services. He also served on the Advisory Panel on Medicare Education for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. He currently serves on the Advisory Committee to the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research. He has published more than 60 scholarly articles in health services research and policy and received awards recognizing his research contributions from NRHA, RUPRI, and the University of Nebraska. Dr. Mueller has directed major health services studies funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Neal Neuberger was selected as the first executive director of the Institute for e-Health Policy, a part of the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Foundation. The Institute provides educational opportunities in the Washington, D.C., area for public- and private-sector stakeholders who both make, and are impacted by, e-health policy decisions. He is president of Health Tech Strategies, LLC, a Virginia-based consulting firm focused on the public and private sector policy environment with regard to research, development and implementation of emerging health care technologies. Neuberger coordinates a “Capitol Hill Steering Committee on Telehealth and Healthcare Informatics” that hosts lunch briefing sessions and technology demonstrations for Members of Congress and their staff. He is chair of the American Telemedicine Association Policy Committee and recently served on the ATA Board of Directors. Neuberger was a senior lobbyist before Congress for the American Hospital Association. He served as a legislative assistant to U.S. Rep. David R. Obey (Wis.) on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education.