

Speaker Biographies

“Behavioral Health: Can Primary Care Help Meet the Growing Need?”

May 4, 2012

Sam Donaldson, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist, joined Cenpatico in September 2004 as president and chief executive officer. Cenpatico is an accredited managed behavioral health care organization active in 14 states. Providing leadership for all aspects of Cenpatico’s service delivery, company growth and financial stability, Mr. Donaldson acts as liaison between the company and key stakeholders including government agencies, advocacy groups, and regulatory bodies, as well as Centene’s health plans and other specialty divisions. During his tenure, Cenpatico’s membership has increased from 800,000 to nearly 2 million. Mr. Donaldson has a total of 31 years of behavioral health and substance abuse treatment experience. Before coming to Cenpatico, he worked as an executive for Magellan Health Services and was also a founder and managing partner of a multi-specialty practice. Before entering the managed care system in 1999, he spent 18 years working as a clinician in all levels of care for both substance abuse treatment and mental health. Mr. Donaldson is a licensed psychologist in Pennsylvania. He is on the board of directors of the largest managed care behavioral health trade association, the Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness, and served as chair of the association in 2010. He received a bachelor of science degree in psychology from Southern Methodist University and a Ph.D. in psychology from Duquesne University.

John O'Brien is the senior policy advisor for the Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Previously, Mr. O'Brien was the senior advisor to the administrator on health care reform at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). He was the director of several national projects funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to develop strategies for coordinating funding for human services from federal, state and local dollars. Prior to his work at SAMHSA, Mr. O'Brien worked with the Technical Assistance Collaborative for fifteen years as a senior consultant. He has advised more than 30 states and local human services authorities. He has worked with Medicaid, state mental health and substance abuse authorities. He has worked with states to develop federal Medicaid waivers, Medicaid state plan amendments and federal grant applications (e.g., children’s system of care). Mr. O'Brien has also been a manager at KPMG Peat Marwick and worked for the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center, the Massachusetts Developmental Disability Council, the Illinois Governor’s Office, and the Illinois Legislative Commission on Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse. He was also a program staff member at Thresholds, Inc. in Chicago.

Joseph Parks, M.D. serves as the chief clinical officer for the Missouri Department of Mental Health. He also holds the position of distinguished research professor of science at the University of Missouri – St. Louis and he is director of the Missouri Institute of Mental Health. He also serves as a clinical assistant professor of psychiatry at the University of Missouri in Columbia. Dr. Parks serves as president of the Medical Director’s Council of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. He practices psychiatry on an outpatient basis at Family Health Center, a federally-funded community health center established to expand services to uninsured and underinsured patients in the Columbia area. He recently served as the division director for the Division of Comprehensive Psychiatric Services for the Missouri Department of Mental Health. Dr. Parks has authored or coauthored a number of original articles, monographs, technical papers and reviews on implementation of evidence-based medicine and pharmacy utilization management and behavioral treatment programs. He was awarded the 2006 American Psychiatric Association Bronze Achievement Award for a program controlling pharmacy costs by improving prescribing practices.

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Gloria A. Wilder, M.D., is president and CEO of Core Health, dedicated to assisting underserved communities in improving access and quality of health care. Dr. Wilder is a nationally recognized pediatrician, public speaker and expert on poverty and social justice. She formerly served as director of community pediatrics at Georgetown University and chair of Mobile Health Programs at the Children's National Medical Center. From 2009-2011, she was executive vice president of physician integration and strategic alliances at United Medical Center. Dr. Wilder founded Core Health in 2005. The company includes a clinical division -- the Core Health and Wellness Centers -- which provides comprehensive primary preventive and alternative health services in state-of-the-art medical homes. A believer in turning advocacy into action, she was named Physician Humanitarian of the Year by George Washington University in 2004. The next year, she won the National Caring Award for exceptional generosity and commitment to service (an honor previously awarded to Jimmy Carter and Mother Teresa). Dr. Wilder was also inducted into the Gold Humanism in Medicine Honor Society. She received her bachelors of science degree from Howard University and her Doctor of Medicine degree from Georgetown University. Following her Residency in Pediatrics at Georgetown University, Dr. Gloria, as her patients call her, completed both her Fellowship in Community Pediatrics and Child Advocacy at Georgetown University and her Masters of Public Health at George Washington University.