

Speaker Biographies

Presentation: “Journey Into the Future”

Mary Fermazin, MD, MPA, is the Vice President, Health Policy and Quality Measurement at HSAG. She is responsible for providing corporate leadership on all health policy and quality measurement aspects of the different projects undertaken by the organization. Dr. Fermazin is currently the clinical lead for the Federal program’s Arizona Nursing Home and Home Health quality initiatives, as well as Reducing Health Disparities projects. She is also involved in the external quality review and quality measurement activities for various states.

Dr. Fermazin is an internist with a Master’s degree in Public Administration. Prior to joining HSAG, she was a high-level policy official with the California Department of Health Services. During her tenure, she served in various roles including establishing statewide medical policies and utilization review criteria and evaluation of new benefits and medical technology. As Chief of the Office of Clinical Standards and Quality for the California Medicaid Managed Care Program, she established a set of distinctive clinical standards and cutting edge quality improvement strategies. Due to her knowledge and expertise in quality measurement, she represented California in various national quality forums. For several years, Dr. Fermazin served on NCQA’s Committee for Performance Measurement, responsible for the development of the Health Plans Employer Data Information Set (HEDIS[®]). She was also a key member of the Quality Assurance Technical Advisory Group, which provides recommendations on quality issues to CMS. Dr. Fermazin also chaired a statewide task force and developed standards for cultural competency for managed care plans. Prior to joining the California Department of Health Services, she practiced as an internist, serving primarily Medicare patients and nursing home residents.

Dr. Fermazin received both her BS (Summa Cum Laude) and MD (Magna Cum Laude) from the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines. She completed a residency in internal medicine and a fellowship in gastroenterology at St. Joseph’s Hospital/Northwestern University in Chicago.

Presentation: “ADHS Reflections”

Catherine Corbin, MHS, NHA, is the Program Manager for the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), Office of Long Term Care Licensing. Ms. Corbin is an accomplished licensed nursing home administrator in Arizona and California. Prior to joining ADHS, Ms. Corbin served as a Health Care Administrator in Arizona and California for more than 12 years, most recently at Beatitudes Campus and Forum at Pueblo Norte.

In 1989, Ms. Corbin earned her Bachelor of Arts in Health Administration from St. Mary’s College in Moraga, California. Ms. Corbin continued her education at California State University, Stanislaus and obtained a Master of Arts, with distinction, in Health and Social Services, in 1993.

Ms. Corbin also became an Ordained Minister in 2004 and is working towards a Doctorate of Philosophy in Holistic Health from the Institute of Holistic Theology.

Rudy Karel is an ADHS Deputy Fire Marshall II, Division of Licensing Services, Special Licensing. Mr. Karel started his career as a fire fighter, engineer and lieutenant with the City of Romeoville Fire Department in Illinois in 1971. In 1974 Mr. Karel joined the City of Bolingbrook Fire Department in Illinois and retired after 22 years of service. During his tenure, Mr. Karel served as a fire fighter, engineer and fire inspector.

In April 1996, Mr. Karel joined the ADHS, Division of Licensing Services, as a deputy fire marshal. During his career, Mr. Karel has attended numerous life safety, fire protection, and fire prevention programs presented by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Oklahoma State University, University of Wisconsin, State of Arizona, and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

Mr. Karel holds an Associates Degree in Applied Fire Science Technology from Joliet Junior College and is a state certified arson investigator from the Illinois State Police Academy.

Presentation: “Personhood for Residents with Advanced Dementia: A Panel Presentation”

The following speakers were all contributors to the Arizona Alzheimer’s Association Palliative Care for Advanced Dementia Training Guide.

Carol Long, PhD, RN, is considered a national expert and consultant in community-based health care. With over 13 years of academic teaching at the university level and expertise in Web-based instruction, Dr. Long has held various management positions over a 20-year period ranging from Case Manager to Vice-President of a hospital. Dr. Long has published over 100 articles, book chapters, abstracts, and monographs on home health care, end-of-life care, quality improvement, technology, telehealth, and education. Her work has appeared in numerous journals and publications. She has recently copyrighted the workbook *Safe Passage* for international nurses who have immigrated or are planning to immigrate to the United States. Dr. Long has provided operational analysis, and legal and evaluation consultation for a variety of agencies, including hospices, comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation facilities, training grants, academic institutions, quality improvement organizations (QIOs), and law firms. She recently completed “Improving Pain Interfering with Activity” for home health care with the Delmarva Foundation (Delaware QIO). Her research and innovations have been presented at local, regional, national, and international conferences. In addition, Dr. Long is trained through the End-of-Life Education Consortium (ELNEC) and has orchestrated several regional and statewide ELNEC conferences while presenting on end-of-life care in the Philippines, Colombia, and South America. She has presented on topics and conducted research related to end-of-life care for those with Alzheimer’s disease and was on the 2002 project team for the St. Luke’s Health Initiatives *Coming of Age* report, analyzing elder care needs in the State of Arizona. Dr. Long is presently a consultant with the Alzheimer’s Association–Desert Southwest Chapter on Palliative Care for Advanced Dementia. She is also affiliated with Mesa Community College and Arizona State University College of Nursing. Dr. Long has her BSN from Marquette University (1974), MS from the University of Michigan (1978), and PhD in Sociology from Arizona State University (1997).

Gary Martin, PhD, is the Owner, Officer, CEO, and Arizona Licensed Clinical Psychologist of InteGer Behavioral Health in Phoenix, Arizona. In this role, Dr. Martin serves as the Clinical Director for nine specialized behavior units and 13 specialized dementia units in the Greater Phoenix area. Dr. Martin specializes in fiscal and clinical administration of inpatient and outpatient behavioral health treatment programs for acute and long-term care geriatric patient populations. Dr. Martin has also been instrumental in the education and training of health professionals, social service staff, and gerontology students in the field of clinical gerontology throughout the state of Arizona.

Prior to his role at InterGer Behavioral Health, Dr. Martin was the Clinical Director and founder of skilled care specialized behavior units at East Mesa Care Center and Esperanza Manor for Maricopa Integrated Health System (MIHS), MedPro–Department of Psychiatry, Division of Geriatrics and Long Term Care, in accordance with MIHS contractual requirements.

Dr. Martin currently serves as Member of the Chapter Board of Directors of the Alzheimer’s Association–Desert Southwest Chapter, and has chaired numerous programs within this organization over the past several years. He is also affiliated with the American Psychological Association, Gerontological Society of America, and Psychologists in Long Term Care. Dr. Martin has several publications to his credit with his work in Alzheimer’s and Behavior Management.

Dr. Martin completed his undergraduate work at Stanford University in California, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in 1975. Dr. Martin earned his both his MS Degree (1979) and PhD Degree (1983) in Clinical Psychology from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

Tena Alonzo, MA, has spent the past 20 years addressing the needs of older Americans in long term care. She is currently the Director of the Vermilion Cliffs at Beatitudes Campus in Phoenix, Arizona, a nationally recognized unit dedicated to individuals with dementia. Ms. Alonzo received both her BS (1983) and MA (1985) in Psychology from Northern Arizona University. She is a published author and has presented at state, national, and international conferences.

Toni Horton, BA, NHA, is the Vice President of Health Services at Glencroft Care Center in Glendale, Arizona. Prior to joining Glencroft Care Center in 2002, Ms. Horton served as the initial Executive Director of Sunshine Village in Phoenix, Arizona.

Ms. Horton has seven years prior experience as a Director in assisted living communities dedicated to Alzheimer’s care. She has served as an instructor for the State-approved Assisted Living Caregiver Training Program and as an instructor for the Alzheimer’s Association Directed Care State-approved Caregiver Training Program. During this time, Ms. Horton also contributed as a consultant for the Arizona Model Alzheimer’s Demonstration Project.

Ms. Horton is currently a member of the Alzheimer’s Association Speaker’s Bureau, Education Committee, and Regional Program Planning Committee. She was also the Community Chair of the Alzheimer’s Association, Phoenix Chapter Memory Walk Committee in 2001.

Ms. Horton graduated from Boston University in 1978 with a BA in Psychology. She is currently licensed as a Nursing Home Administrator and certified as an Assisted Living Facility Manager in Arizona.

Presentation: “CMS Nursing Home Culture Change Initiatives”

Captain John Motter, MPH, RN, has been a Registered Nurse in the State of California since February 1977. He became a Nurse Officer in the United States Public Health Service in 1979 and is currently assigned to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) at the Region IX office in San Francisco. Since 1995, Mr. Motter has served as the Team Leader for the Region’s Long Term Care Surveyor Team in the Division of Survey and Certification. His many duties include conducting state agency oversight surveys, participating on national CMS committees, and presenting CMS information at conferences and meetings. He always looks forward to meeting new people in the field of long-term care.

Captain Motter received his BS in Nursing and BA in Psychology from California State University in Los Angeles in 1978. He later received his MPH from Loma Linda University in 1989.

Presentation: “Preview of Quality Measure Management Tools”

Joseph Bestic, NHA, BA, is a Clinical Quality Specialist for nursing homes at Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG) in Phoenix, Arizona. Mr. Bestic is a 1993 graduate of Kent State University and holds a BA in Political Science. Joe possesses 10 years of long-term care management experience, holding Nursing Home Administrator licenses in Arizona, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Upon moving to Arizona in June 2000, Mr. Bestic obtained his Assisted Living Manager Certification.

Mr. Bestic is the HSAG project lead for the Arizona Person Centered Care (PCC) Pilot Collaborative. Mr. Bestic was also instrumental in forming the Provider’s Coordination of Care (PCOC), a project comprised of Arizona hospitals, nursing homes and home health agencies, with the goal of improving continuity across the continuum of care.

Presentation: “Depression Screening in Long Term Care”

Walter Nieri, MD, FACP, has been the Geriatric Fellowship Program Director of Sun Health / St. Joseph’s Geriatric Fellowship Program since 1994. Prior to joining Sun Health, Dr. Nieri was in private practice for 20 years, specializing in internal medicine and geriatrics. In addition to his current role, Dr. Nieri serves as Medical Director at Sun Health Care Center, Sun Health Grandview Care Center, Huger Mercy Living Center, and Sun Health Residence for Alzheimer’s Care.

Dr. Nieri completed his undergraduate studies at St. Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, earning a BS degree in 1964. Dr. Nieri completed his post-graduate work at Loyola Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago, Illinois, earning an MD in 1968. In addition to being a licensed MD in Arizona, Dr. Nieri is Board Certified in internal medicine, geriatrics, and as a medical director in long-term care.

Dr. Nieri is currently active with the Maricopa County Medical Society, Arizona Geriatric Society (Past President 1997, 1998), Arizona Medical Association, and Maricopa County Elder Abuse Prevention Alliance. Dr. Nieri also holds the distinction of serving on the Governor's Commission on Aging and End of Life since 1997. He has also served on U.S. Senator John McCain's Health Advisory Committee.

Dr. Nieri has also been recognized with the Distinguished Public Service Medal of Maricopa County Medical Society in 1989 and listed as "Top Doc" in Phoenix Magazine.