

Committee on the Strategic Plan and Blueprint for Addressing Thalassemia in the United States

SPEAKER BIOS

Meeting 1, Open Session: Monday, April 7, 2025, 3:45-6 PM ET

Sujit Sheth, MD

**Chief of the Division of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology
Professor of Clinical Pediatrics and Vice Chair of Clinical Research, Department of Pediatrics
Attending Pediatrician at New York-Presbyterian Phyllis and David Komansky Children's
Hospital and Weill Cornell Medical Center**

Dr. Sheth is a classical hematologist with a clinical and research focus on red blood cell disorders and iron. He is the Harold Weill Professor of Pediatric Hematology in the Department of Pediatrics at Weill Cornell Medicine and New York Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. With over 30 years of experience in the field, he currently leads the New York Comprehensive Thalassemia Center, which provides a medical home for over 250 individuals with the disease, spanning the entire age and clinical spectrum of the disease. He is the author of the chapter on Thalassemia Syndromes in two major textbooks of Hematology, and has written reviews, and given numerous lectures on the subject, most recently focused on novel therapies under study or just approved for clinical use.

Craig Butler, MA

National Executive Director, Cooley's Anemia Foundation

Mr. Butler is the National Executive Director of the Cooley's Anemia Foundation, which has been leading the fight against Thalassemia for over half a century. Mr. Butler himself has been an active participant in that fight for over a decade, starting with the Foundation as National Communications Director in 2001. In addition to directing all communications-related activities in that capacity, he also served as the Principal Investigator on the Foundation's collaborative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help educate the Thalassemia community about effective prevention strategies that can contribute to better outcomes for those with Thalassemia. In addition to advocating on behalf of individuals with severe forms of Thalassemia, Mr. Butler directs Cooley's Anemia Foundation efforts aimed at informing both the general public and specific at-risk populations about Thalassemia trait. He also oversees programs to encourage all members of the public to donate blood, as treatment for Thalassemia

involves frequent lifelong transfusions. Mr. Butler is proud to be the author of “The Cooley’s Anemia Foundation Storybook,” a publication for children with Thalassemia. Mr. Butler received a BFA from Syracuse University and an MA from New York University.

Angela Snyder, PhD, MPH

**Director of Health Policy and Financing, Georgia Health Policy Center
Research Professor, Department of Public Management and Policy,
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University**

Dr. Snyder is a Research Professor at Georgia State University and is the Director of Health Policy and Financing at the Georgia Health Policy Center where she has worked for 20 years. Prior to pursuing her PhD, Dr. Snyder worked for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for nine years. As Principal Investigator on numerous federally funded projects focused on surveillance of and health promotion for individuals with hemoglobin disorders, she has fourteen years of experience in planning, organizing, and convening multi-disciplinary teams focused on clinical, public health, and data coordination related to hemoglobinopathies. Her research uses both quantitative (including administrative data) and qualitative data to study the health outcomes that result from the organization and financing of health systems. She has extensively studied access to and quality of care for those with hemoglobin disorders as well as promoted and educated stakeholders on transfusion safety and blood donor diversity. Dr. Snyder received her PhD in health policy from Yale University and her MPH in health systems management from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

Rajesh Sharma, PhD, FACMG

**Chief & CLIA Director, Laboratory Services Branch
Genetic Disease Screening Program, California Department of Public Health**

Dr. Sharma serves as the Chief and CLIA Director of the Laboratory Services Branch of the Genetic Disease Screening Program at the California Department of Public Health, located in Richmond, California. He is a board-certified clinical biochemical geneticist by the American Board of Medical Genetics and Genomics with over 25 years of experience in Clinical Biochemical Genetics and Clinical Chemistry.

Dr. Sharma earned his PhD in Biochemistry in India. Before joining CDPH, he was the scientific director in the Department of Biochemical Genetics at Quest Diagnostics Nichols Institute in San Juan Capistrano, California. Before that role, he led the Biochemical Genetics Unit in the Department of Medical Genetics at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in New Delhi, where he established the Biochemical Genetics laboratory. He completed his Biochemical Genetics Fellowship in January 2006 at Tulane Medical School and Stanford University.

As a laboratory director, Dr. Sharma oversees the quality and performance of clinical newborn screening assays, including new assay development and validation in accordance with regulatory guidelines. He is also responsible for planning and managing scientific research on genetics and genetic disease testing for CDPH, hiring staff, and the newborn screening program's overall administration and clinical operations. He has been actively involved with the College of American Pathologists for over ten years, conducting multiple inspections on their behalf.