

Open Session Part 2: Committee on Strategies to Enhance Pediatric Health Research Funded by NIH

MARCH 28, 2025 | 9:00 – 11:00 AM EST

Speaker Bios

Michael F. Chiang, MD, is Director of the National Eye Institute. By background, he is a pediatric ophthalmologist and is also board-certified in clinical informatics. His research focuses on the interface of biomedical informatics and clinical ophthalmology in areas such as retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), telehealth, artificial intelligence, electronic health records, data science, and genotype-phenotype correlation. He is an Adjunct Investigator at the National Library of Medicine, and his group has published over 250 peer-reviewed papers and developed an assistive artificial intelligence system for ROP that received Breakthrough Status from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Dr. Chiang began at NIH in November 2020. He serves as Co-Chair of a trans-NIH working group for high value data asset sustainability, Chair of a trans-NIH clinical trials infrastructure working group, Co-Chair of a trans-NIH medical imaging working group, Co-Chair of the NIH AIM-AHEAD advisory committee, and Co-Chair of the NIH Common Fund Bridge2AI program. He is a member of the NIH Scientific Data Council.

Gayathri Dowling, PhD, is the Director of the Adolescent Brain and Cognitive Development (ABCD) Project at the National Institute on Drug Abuse, part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Previously, Dr. Dowling served as the Deputy Director of the Office of Science Policy, Engagement, Education, and Communications at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and the Chief of Science Policy at NIDA. In these positions, she provided scientifically-based information to patients and their family members, health professionals, researchers, policy makers, and other stakeholders to inform policy and promote the prevention and treatment of a wide variety of diseases. Dr. Dowling earned a Ph.D. in Neurobiology from the University of California at Davis, where she studied the developing nervous system, and subsequently conducted research at the Parkinson's Institute prior to joining NIH where she initially worked at the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

John W. Glod, MD, PhD, is a Senior Clinician in the Pediatric Oncology Branch of the National Cancer Institute. Dr. Glod obtained his M.D. and Ph.D. from the University of Colorado in Denver and trained in pediatrics and pediatric oncology at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, Johns Hopkins Hospital, and the Pediatric Oncology Branch of the NCI. Following a fellowship in neuro-oncology at the NCI, Dr. Glod served as faculty in the departments of pediatrics and pharmacology at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey. Dr. Glod joined the Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics Section in 2013. His research interests focus on understanding the biology of rare pediatric solid tumors and exploring new therapies for patients with these diseases. Dr. Glod became a Senior Clinician in 2024.

Brigitte C. Widemann, MD, is the Chief of the Pediatric Oncology Branch (POB) at the National Cancer Institute (NCI). A pediatric oncologist, she specializes in developing therapies for children and adults with genetic tumor predisposition syndromes, like neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1), and rare solid tumors. Dr. Widemann leads a research program focused on basic, translational, and clinical studies for hematologic and solid malignancies in children and young adults. She joined the NCI in 1992 after earning her MD and completing pediatric residency at the University of Cologne in Germany. Her research centers on drug development and clinical trials for refractory solid tumors, rare tumors, and genetic tumor predisposition syndromes, particularly NF1. Dr. Widemann received tenure at the NIH in 2009 and became POB Chief in 2016. Her team's work on NF1 led to the FDA approval of selumetinib, the first medical therapy for children with NF1 and inoperable plexiform neurofibromas. She also co-leads the Cancer Moonshot-funded My Pediatric and Adult Rare Tumor (MyPART) network to advance rare tumor research and therapy development. Dr. Widemann is a member of the Association of American Physicians and recipient of the AACR-Joseph H. Burchenal Award for Outstanding Achievement in Clinical Cancer Research. She

serves as special advisor to the NCI Director for childhood cancer and has authored over 200 original scientific papers and led numerous clinical trials.

Kimberly Gray, PhD, is an epidemiologist and manages a portfolio in neuroepidemiology and directs the NIEHS Collaborative Centers for Children's Environmental Health & Translation Disease and Maintaining and Enriching Environmental Epidemiology Cohorts program. She is an active member of the NIEHS WHO Collaborative Center, Fogarty GeoHealth Hub, ABCD and HBCD NIH Consortium, the NIH Environmental Children's Health Outcomes program and the NIH Pediatric Research Consortium. Gray serves as the co-chair of President's Task Force on Children's Environmental Health and Safety subcommittee on chemical exposures. She received her Ph.D in Epidemiology from the University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School in Public Health and a postdoctoral fellowship in the NIEHS Epidemiology Branch examining the long-term effects of polychlorinated biphenyl exposure during pregnancy on childhood development in the NIH Collaborative Perinatal Project. Gray's previous research experience included working on several cohort studies including the Cardiovascular Health Study, Women's Health Initiative, the Maternal Health Practices and Child Development Project, the Collaborative Perinatal Project, and the ALS Gulf-War Veterans study.

Amelia Karraker, PhD, serves as Branch Chief of Macrosocial Processes in the Population and Social Processes (PSP) Unit within Division of Behavioral and Social Research (DBSR) at NIA. Amelia manages a scientific portfolio that focuses on research infrastructure including educational cohort studies (Educational Studies for Health Aging Research, National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health, National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth, and Wisconsin Longitudinal Study) and the Demography and Economics of Aging P30 Centers Program. Before coming to NIA in 2016, she was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Iowa State University. Prior to that, she was an NIA Postdoctoral Fellow at the Population Studies Center, University of Michigan. Her Ph.D. in sociology was awarded by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she was an NIA pre-doctoral trainee. She completed a B.A. in sociology with honors at the University of Chicago where she was also an undergraduate research assistant on an NIA-funded R01. Her research focused on how life course processes related to family and socioeconomic status shape later life health.

Kelly A. King, AuD, PhD, is a Program Director at the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communications Disorders (NIDCD), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). NIDCD's mission is to conduct and support biomedical and behavioral research and research training in the normal and disordered processes of hearing, balance, taste, smell, voice, speech, and language. Dr. King has spent over 20 years at NIDCD, initially as a clinical investigator in the division of intramural research, before transitioning to her current role managing a portfolio in hearing and balance research across the lifespan, which includes clinical trials, translational studies, public health initiatives, and work on early diagnosis and intervention. She received her doctoral degrees from the University of Maryland College Park, and completed clinical and research training in audiology at Children's National Hospital, the National Naval Medical Center, and the NIH Clinical Center.

George F. Koob, PhD, is an internationally recognized expert on alcohol and stress, and the neurobiology of alcohol and drug addiction. He is the Director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), where he provides leadership in the national effort to reduce the public health burden associated with alcohol misuse. As NIAAA Director, Dr. Koob oversees a broad portfolio of alcohol research ranging from basic science to epidemiology, diagnostics, prevention, and treatment.

Jeanne Marrazzo, MD, MPH, began her tenure as the sixth NIAID Director in the fall of 2023. She oversees a \$6.6 billion budget that supports research to advance the understanding, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of infectious, immunologic, and allergic diseases. She is internationally recognized for her research and education efforts in the field of sexually transmitted infections, especially as they affect women's health. Dr. Marrazzo's research in discovery and implementation science has focused on the human microbiome, specifically as it relates to female reproductive tract infections and hormonal contraception; prevention of HIV infection using biomedical interventions, including preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and microbicides; and the pathogenesis and

management of bacterial vaginosis (BV), sexually transmitted diseases in people with HIV, and management of antibiotic resistance in gonorrhea. Prior to her position at NIAID, Dr. Marrazzo was Director of the Division of Infectious Diseases at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. There she had the opportunity and resources to lead in the areas she cares deeply about: research in discovery and implementation science; the development and support of trainees; the advancement of underrepresented minorities in medicine and leadership; promoting meaningful dialogue with communities, and patient care.

Susan R. Mendley, MD, is a Senior Scientific Analyst in the Division of Kidney, Urologic and Hematologic Diseases of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Her current portfolio includes research related to acute and chronic kidney diseases that affect children, including the Pediatric Centers of Excellence in Nephrology, as well as basic, translational and clinical research in adult chronic kidney disease, dialysis, and transplantation. She also oversees clinical and translational research in polycystic kidney disease, including the Polycystic Kidney Disease Research Resource Consortium. She is the Executive Secretary of the Kidney Interagency Coordinating Committee which was established by Congress in 1987 to encourage cooperation, communication, and collaboration among all Federal agencies involved in kidney research and other kidney disease-related activities.

Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable, MD, is Director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) and Principal Investigator in the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Pérez-Stable's research interests have centered on improving the health of racial/ethnic minorities and underserved populations, advancing patient-centered care, improving cross-cultural communication skills among health care professionals, and enabling the biomedical workforce and health care professionals to address and prevent the health challenges of all people. Recognized as a leader in Latino health care and disparities research, Dr. Pérez-Stable has spent more than 30 years leading research on smoking cessation and tobacco control policy in Latino populations in the United States and Latin America. Dr. Pérez-Stable's research interests have centered on improving the health of racial/ethnic minorities and underserved populations, advancing patient-centered care, improving cross-cultural communication skills among health care professionals, and enabling the biomedical workforce and health care professionals to address and prevent the health challenges of all people.

Annapurna (Ann) Poduri, MD, joined the NINDS in October 2024 as Deputy Director. Previously, she served as founder and director of the Epilepsy Genetics Program and Associate Chief for Academic Development in the Department of Neurology at Boston Children's Hospital and Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School. For many years, she has pursued the genetic causes of epilepsy from the clinic to the laboratory, with early work involving novel discovery of somatic mutation in pediatric brain disease. After her undergraduate studies at Harvard University and medical school at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Poduri trained in pediatrics and child neurology at Boston Children's Hospital and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Following a clinical fellowship in epilepsy and post-doctoral training in neurogenetics at Boston Children's, she led a laboratory in the Department of Neurology's F.M. Kirby Neurobiology Center. In addition to her role as Deputy Director, Dr. Poduri will lead a laboratory focusing on epilepsy genetics at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Jennifer Webster-Cyriaque, DDS, PhD, is the acting director of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, National Institutes of Health. An accomplished clinician, researcher, and leader, Dr. Webster-Cyriaque had previously served as a faculty member at the University of North Carolina (UNC) schools of dentistry and medicine for more than two decades. While there, she led research into a potential etiologic agent for salivary gland disease in patients living with HIV, assessed the oral microbiome and its implications for cancer-causing viruses, and studied the impact of the oral microbiome and oral health on HIV outcomes. In addition to her research, Dr. Webster-Cyriaque has held leadership roles as the chair/vice chair of the Oral HIV/AIDS Research Alliance, as research director at the National Dental Association Foundation, as director of postdoctoral CTSA training, along with multiple roles within the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research and the International Association for Dental Research. Dr. Webster-Cyriaque earned her Ph.D. in

microbiology/immunology from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in 1998, her D.D.S. from SUNY Buffalo in 1992, and her B.A. in biology and interdisciplinary social science from SUNY Buffalo in 1988.