



Estimating Cost Reductions from MassHealth Homeless Support Programs

Speaker Biographies

Thomas Byrne, PhD is an assistant professor of Social Welfare Policy at the Boston University School of Social Work. Mr. Byrne's research focuses broadly on homelessness and assisted housing policy, with a particular focus on prevention-oriented approaches to homelessness. He also has an expertise in the use of administrative data for policy analysis and evaluation and is a strong advocate for the use of such data in policy research. In addition to his position at Boston University, Mr. Byrne is an investigator at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans where he conducts research and evaluation in support of the VA's plan to prevent and end homelessness among veterans. His work has been published in academic journals spanning a number of disciplines including *The American Journal of Public Health*, *Social Service Review*, *Psychiatric Services*, and *Housing Policy Debate*. Mr. Byrne is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Boston College from which he received a bachelor of arts in economics. He received both his master in social work and doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy and Practice.

Lyndia Downie has been Pine Street Inn's president and executive director since 2000. As a result of her leadership and vision, Pine Street is now the largest provider of permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless men and women in New England. During her tenure, Pine Street has more than tripled its inventory of permanent supportive housing and now has more than 900 housing units. Her collaboration with other key agencies, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the city of Boston has contributed to an 18 percent decrease in the number of homeless individuals living on the streets and in shelters in Boston over the past decade. With a \$50 million budget and services provided at 45 sites throughout Greater Boston, Pine Street is New England's largest resource for homeless and formerly homeless adults. The organization serves 1,900 individuals each day, providing services that span street outreach, emergency shelter, job training, and a growing program of permanent supportive housing. iCater, a Pine Street Inn social enterprise, is a successful catering business providing job training to homeless individuals.

With her keen understanding of the complex causes of homelessness and proven methods to combat it, Lyndia is a frequently requested speaker and regularly serves as a policy advisor at the city, state, and federal level. She serves on Mayor Martin Walsh's Advisory Council on Homelessness and was a member of the task force that helped shape the city of Boston's new action plan to end veteran and chronic homelessness. She also serves on a number of policy advisory committees to the state's Executive Office of Health and Human Services and was a member of Governor Baker's Task Force on Persons Facing Chronically High Unemployment. She has presented on Pine Street Inn's strategic housing expansion at the annual conference of the National Alliance to End Homelessness in Washington, D.C. and at the national Housing First Partners conference in Chicago. Additionally, she has been tapped to serve on a number of committees and boards, including the Massachusetts Council of Human Service Providers and the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership. She was also named a Barr Fellow through the Barr Foundation's program to honor nonprofit leaders in the region and has co-taught a course in ending homelessness at the Harvard Kennedy School.

Philip W. Johnston is the founder and president of Philip W. Johnston Associates and a recognized national and state leader on health and human services issues. Mr. Johnston began his career as a child welfare social worker in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Following work on the campaign of Senator Robert F. Kennedy in 1968, Mr. Johnston founded the RFK Children's Action Corps, a private nonprofit agency that provides residential and educational services for at-risk children throughout Massachusetts. Mr. Johnston was elected as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1974 and was re-elected four times by large margins. Governor Michael S. Dukakis appointed Mr. Johnston to serve as Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services in 1984, a position he held until 1991. In this capacity, he was chief executive officer and principal policymaker for 17 diverse state human services agencies, including adult and juvenile corrections, parole, public welfare, child welfare, public health, mental health and retardation, medical security, disabilities, and rate setting. He directed the development and implementation of major projects including the Mental Health Action Project, a five-year, \$350 million initiative to reform the state's mental health system; the creation of the nation's first state agency serving the deaf and hard of hearing; the development of a highly successful employment and training program that put thousands of welfare recipients to work; and the enactment of the state's initial universal health care legislation.

In 1991, Mr. Johnston was appointed executive director of the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights in Washington D.C., the Kennedy family's living memorial to the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy. In 1993, President Clinton appointed Mr. Johnston to serve as New England Administrator of Health and Human Services, where he served until 1996. Mr. Johnston has taught human services and public administration courses at both the graduate and undergraduate levels at Curry College and Boston University. He holds a master's of public administration from Harvard University.

Audrey Shelto is president of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. As a proven leader with 30 years of achievement in improving the delivery of health care and human services, particularly for low-income and vulnerable populations, Ms. Shelto assumed leadership of the Foundation in August 2013. She is widely recognized for her expertise in all aspects of health care and leads the Foundation's strategic agenda to broaden health coverage and reduce barriers to care through grants, research, and policy initiatives.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Ms. Shelto directed Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts' efforts to develop a demonstration program for those dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare. Previous positions at Blue Cross Blue Shield included senior vice president for Health and Wellness, where she led the development of a new member-centered model of provider-integrated health management designed to improve health care quality and affordability. Ms. Shelto's other professional experience includes positions as chief operating officer of Neighborhood Health Plan, executive director for the Boston Mayor's Advisory Committee on Health Care, associate commissioner of Massachusetts's Department of Mental Health, and assistant budget director for the Massachusetts Executive Office for Administration and Finance. She holds a bachelor's degree with honors from the University of Connecticut and a master's degree in management of human services from the Heller School at Brandeis University.

Daniel Tsai is assistant secretary for MassHealth and Medicaid director for the Commonwealth. Assistant Secretary Tsai was appointed in January 2015 by Governor Charlie Baker to oversee the state's \$15 billion Medicaid program, which covers one in four residents in the Commonwealth. In this role, Assistant Secretary Tsai is responsible for ensuring a robust and sustainable MassHealth program. That includes developing new policies, payment models, and operational processes that improve the way health care is delivered to 1.9 million low- and moderate-income individuals and individuals with disabilities.

Before joining the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Assistant Secretary Tsai was a partner and leader in McKinsey & Company's Healthcare Systems and Services practice. He has significant experience on the design and implementation of innovative, state-wide health care payment systems for Medicaid, Medicare, and commercial populations, and has worked closely with multiple state Medicaid programs, private payers, and health services companies. He received a bachelor of arts degree in applied mathematics and economics from Harvard University.