



STAFF

MARK J. COVALL

Mark J. Covall is president and CEO of the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS). Founded in 1933, NAPHS advocates for behavioral health and represents provider systems that are committed to the delivery of responsive, accountable, and clinically effective prevention, treatment, and care for children, adolescents, adults, and older adults with mental and substance use disorders. Its members are behavioral healthcare provider organizations, including more than 600 specialty psychiatric hospitals, general hospital psychiatric and addiction treatment units, residential treatment centers, youth services organizations, and other providers of care. In this role, Mr. Covall oversees policy for the association. He is an expert in Medicare/Medicaid issues and has founded and helped to lead a wide variety of coalitions working to improve the lives of individuals with mental and addictive disorders. He has played a central role in advocacy successes on issues such as parity, the Medicare inpatient psychiatric prospective payment system, and healthcare reform, among others. Prior to becoming NAPHS president/CEO, Mr. Covall served as the executive director of the American Managed Behavioral Healthcare Association (now known as the Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness)—an association representing the nation's leading managed behavioral healthcare companies. Mr. Covall also served for nine years as the director of government relations for NAPHS. Mr. Covall has worked on Capitol Hill for the House Aging Committee's Health and Long-Term Care Subcommittee. Overall, Mr. Covall has more than 30 years of experience in healthcare policy.

KATHLEEN McCANN, RN, PhD

Kathleen McCann, RN, PhD, is the director of quality and regulatory affairs for the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS). As a clinical leader within NAPHS for more than 15 years, Dr. McCann serves as a key contact for both members and policy leaders on a wide range of quality, clinical, accreditation, and regulatory issues affecting treatment for individuals of all ages who are experiencing psychiatric and substance use disorders. She helps the association enhance its focus on quality by building strategic partnerships in support of this critical area. She serves as the NAPHS liaison to the National Quality Forum, of which NAPHS is a member. Dr. McCann also provides clinical consultation and education to the 600 NAPHS-member systems and facilities. She works with hospital accrediting organizations in the areas of standards development and quality initiatives (including the Hospital-Based Inpatient Psychiatric Services ([HBIPS](#)) [core measures](#) initiative, a project in which she has played a leadership role with The Joint Commission and other partner organizations). In addition, she guides and supports the association's activities related to current regulatory requirements, including inpatient and outpatient payment systems, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Conditions of Participation, and youth services issues. During her career as a registered nurse, Dr. McCann has practiced in both medical/surgical and psychiatric clinical settings. Dr. McCann received her bachelor's degree in nursing from St. Joseph College, in Emmitsburg, MD, and both master's and doctoral degrees in nursing, with special emphasis in psychiatric nursing, from The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC. She received the "Excellence in Leadership Award" from the American Psychiatric Nurses Association.

NANCY TRENTI, JD

Nancy Trenti, JD, is director of government affairs for the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS). In this role she works with Congress, the administration, and other provider, professional, and advocacy groups on a wide range of behavioral healthcare policy issues including access and coverage, parity, youth services, and fair funding. Ms. Trenti came to NAPHS from the American Psychiatric Association where she served for five years as an associate director in the Division of Government Relations. In this role, she advocated for a wide array of issues impacting individuals with mental and addictive disorders, with particular emphasis on privacy, substance abuse and prescription authority, biomedical research, veteran health care, and minority populations. Prior to working at the APA,

she was assistant director of federal government affairs for the National Association of Health Underwriters. In this position, she represented the health insurance industry in such federal healthcare issues as Medicare and prescription drug reform, healthcare tax credits, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and long-term care. Ms. Trenti holds a law degree from the University of Baltimore Law School and a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from the University of Baltimore.

CAROLE SZPAK

Carole Szpak, director of operations and communications, came to the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS) in 1986 following 10 years of experience helping member hospitals open and market both psychiatric and addiction treatment facilities. At NAPHS, she wears a number of hats, including marketing, media relations, research, member communications, and strategic planning. Ms. Szpak has worked with a number of key coalitions to communicate essential information about the importance of behavioral health. Much of her role overall is explaining trends in behavioral healthcare delivery to the people that matter to the future of our field – from insurers and employers to legislators and regulators. She has received 20 national and regional awards for her communications efforts at both the association and hospital levels. Her nearly 35 years of experience in behavioral health spans a period of tremendous change in the industry. She received a bachelor's degree in communications from The American University, Washington, DC.

MARIA MERLIE

Maria Merlie, director of administration and membership services for the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS), joined the association in 1994. In this role, she is responsible for a wide variety of member services, including the NAPHS Annual Meeting, the association's Web site (www.naphs.org), and other major activities (including retention/recruitment of members, elections, the NAPHS PAC, and administration). She also serves as the staff liaison to the NAPHS Board of Trustees and is responsible for managing sponsorship opportunities available to those who serve the behavioral health industry. She is a graduate of the Katharine Gibbs Business School.

FRIEDA EASTMANN

Frieda Eastmann is senior project manager for the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS). She is responsible for writing, editing, and producing a variety of publications (including the association's popular weekly newsletter *CEO Forecast*, the *NAPHS Membership Directory*, and the *Purchasing Directory for Behavioral Health Decision-makers*). She also oversees advertising and special communications projects. Ms. Eastmann first came to the association in 1989 as director of publications and associate director of communications, during which time she also served as managing editor of a peer-reviewed psychiatric journal. Prior to her current position, she was director of publications for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Arlington, VA. Ms. Eastmann has freelanced throughout her career as a writer/editor/researcher/production supervisor for projects ranging from clinical symposia presentations and book chapters in psychiatry to journal articles, collateral print materials, and Web materials for organizations ranging from the American Psychiatric Association to the Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) Association. Previous positions include teaching, editing a regional magazine, and serving as vice president/creative director for an advocacy and business-to-business advertising agency with national clients. Ms. Eastmann graduated from Kutztown University, did graduate work at Lehigh University, and completed the graduate-level publishing program at The George Washington University.