



JOINT WEBINAR

VOTING & HEALTH: EVIDENCE AND NEW TOOLS FOR ACTION

WHEN:

AUGUST 31, 12:30-2:00 PM EDT

On this final day of Civic Health Month 2021, join us for a timely conversation about the relationship between voting and health. Speakers will discuss powerful conceptual frameworks, and share novel partnerships aimed at improving the health of people in our democracy and the health of democracy itself.

This event will:

- Explain why voting is a powerful political determinant of health
- Introduce a set of practices to build our collective capacity to address political determinants and to assure the conditions for health for all
- Explore the Health and Democracy Index, a new tool to illustrate the connection between voting and health
- Share opportunities for action to improve civic engagement and advance health equity
- Close with a Q&A and calls to action

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Please share with your networks.

Questions? Contact Alina Baciu (abaciu@nas.edu) and Aliya Bhatia (aliya@vot-er.org).

SPEAKERS:

Jeanne Ayers
Healthy Democracy
Healthy People

Aliya Bhatia
Vot-ER & Civic
Health Month

Daniel Dawes
Morehouse School of
Medicine

Dawn Hunter
Network for Public
Health Law

MODERATOR:

Dr. Georges Benjamin
American Public
Health Association

BIOSKETCHES

Jeanne Ayers, RN, MPH, is executive director of Healthy People Healthy Democracy Initiative (previously known as VoteSAFE Public Health) a coalition of 10 national public health organizations focused on advancing health equity by assuring participation in the electoral process is available to everyone. Before joining the Initiative in 2020, Ayers held leadership roles in state governmental public health for over 9 years. She served as the State Health Officer for the Wisconsin Division of Public Health and as Assistant Commissioner and Chief Health Equity Strategist for the Minnesota Department of Health. Ayers was responsible for development of the Minnesota Department of Health, award-winning report “Advancing Health Equity in Minnesota: A report to the State Legislature.” She led the health equity work of the faith-based organizing group, ISALAH, and launched the Healthy Heartland initiative, a partnership of community organizing and public health organizations in five Midwest states building collective capacity to impact public policy. Ayers describes her work as building power to assure the conditions necessary for health are available for all.

Georges Benjamin, MD, has been the executive director of the American Public Health Association (APHA) since 2002. He came to APHA from his position as secretary of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. As secretary, Dr. Benjamin oversaw the expansion and improvement of the state’s Medicaid program. An established administrator, author and orator, Dr. Benjamin started his medical career in 1981 in Tacoma, Washington, where he managed a 72,000-patient visit ambulatory care service as chief of the Acute Illness Clinic at the Madigan Army Medical Center and was an attending physician within the Department of Emergency Medicine. A few years later, he moved to Washington, D.C., where he served as chief of emergency medicine at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. After leaving the Army, he chaired the Department of Community Health and Ambulatory Care at the District of Columbia General Hospital.

He is the author of more than 100 scientific articles and book chapters. Dr. Benjamin is a member of the National Academy of Medicine (formally the Institute of Medicine) of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine and also serves on the boards for many organizations including Research!America and the Reagan-Udall Foundation. In 2008, 2014 and 2016 he was named one of the top 25 minority executives in health care by Modern Healthcare Magazine, in addition to being voted among the 100 most influential people in health care from 2007-2017.

Aliya Bhatia, MPP, is the chief operating officer at Vot-ER. She previously worked at the crossroads of education, housing, and health & wellness at Purpose Built Communities. Bhatia began her career as a Teach For America corps member in New Orleans and as a strategy consultant at the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in Atlanta. While at BCG, she supported a range of clients across sectors both on business strategy and on diversity & inclusion efforts. She completed her Masters in Public Policy from Harvard Kennedy School as a Sheila C. Johnson Leadership Fellow and is a graduate of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University.

Daniel Dawes, JD, is a lawyer, author, scholar, educator, and leader in the health equity, health reform, and mental health movements. He is the executive director of the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia and a professor of health law, policy and management. He is also the co-founder of the Health Equity Leadership and Exchange Network (HELEN), which is a nationwide network of over 2000 governmental and non-governmental leaders and scholars focused on bolstering leadership and the exchange of research, information, and solutions to advance evidence-based health equity-focused policies and programs.

Dawes was instrumental in shaping the Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare) and founded and chaired the largest advocacy group, the National Working Group on Health Disparities and Health Reform, focused on developing comprehensive, inclusive and meaningful legislation to reform the health care system and address the disparities in health care and health status among racial and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, women, children, LGBT individuals, and other vulnerable groups in the United States.

Dawes is an elected fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, and serves or served on several boards, commissions, and councils focused on improving health outcomes and elevating health equity in the United States and around the world.

Dawn Hunter, JD, MPH, CPH, is director of the Southeastern Region of the Network for Public Health Law. An experienced legislative analyst and state health department policymaker, Hunter leads work to examine legislation impacting health and racial equity, and to identify and implement strategies to build the capacity of public health agencies and organizations to effectively use law and policy to improve health outcomes. Hunter also conducts training on equity in public health messaging, leads an ongoing assessment of declarations of racism as a public health crisis and related efforts to address health inequities, and focuses on strategies to improve health outcomes through civic engagement. Prior to joining the Network, Hunter served in a number of roles focused on public health, policy, and health equity, including serving as Deputy Cabinet Secretary at the New Mexico Department of Health, where some of her core responsibilities included managing the Department's legislative agenda and policy activities.