

Kate Davidson, MSW

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Arlington, VA

Summary: Innovative healthcare executive who leverages implementation and quality improvement science to achieve improved health outcomes for patients. Grounded in clinical and administrative healthcare experience, strategically identifies policy levers that will have maximum impact on improving the care experience for people in our healthcare system. Has led and scaled nationally recognized improvement programs that have demonstrated groundbreaking results through engagement of a broad range of stakeholders.

Experience

Area Lead, Strategic Partnerships for Healthcare Transformation, Duke University, Duke Margolis Institute for Health Policy, Washington, D.C.

February 2026-Present

- Provides strategic advisement to faculty and research teams to accelerate healthcare transformation across a broad portfolio of policy and payment issues
- Develops and maintains relationships with key stakeholders across the private and public sectors to maximize the impact of innovative policy and implementation approaches
- Serves as advisor and subject matter expert on rapid learning and implementation science

Director, Learning and Diffusion Group, CMS Innovation Center, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Washington, D.C.

January 2020-January 2026

- Led the vision and strategy of the learning and diffusion activities of the Innovation Center based in implementation and quality improvement science and across a portfolio of over 50 payment and care delivery models
- Developed a framework adopted by CMS to promote a data-driven, national learning health system leveraging network theory, positive deviance methodology and pragmatic quality improvement testing

- Applied rigorous, data-driven quality improvement efforts to isolate the highest performing practices and health systems across Innovation Center models using the positive deviance methodology
- Designed and launched a new program to isolate the distinct strategies and tactics model participants are deploying at the site of care through multi-site, rapid-cycle randomized control trials
- Led internal research efforts to examine the differences in supplemental benefits in MA and waiver use in traditional Medicare leading to broader application of regulatory flexibilities at scale in CMS payment models
- Responsible for the vision and execution of several Innovation Center initiatives including multi-payer alignment, prospective market analytics, participant recruitment, patient-empowerment and scaling system transformation
- Led the Health Care Payment Learning and Action Network (HCP-LAN) on behalf of CMS leading to year over year growth by introducing new goals, measurement specifications and strategic initiatives
- Negotiated on behalf of the Innovation Center with private and public payers to support the directional payer alignment efforts to reduce provider burden leading to the highest levels of payer engagement and partnership in the Center's history
- Led a team of 30-50 experts and analysts focused on improving health outcomes and managed a budget of around \$100 million annually in government contracts
- Improved center-wide payment and care delivery model design by introducing tools such as a standardized driver diagram, cross-model dashboard, prospective market analytics and patient journey mapping
- Represented CMS and the CMS Innovation Center on numerous public speaking events, negotiations and meetings

Assistant Vice President, Policy, Practice Improvement and Consulting, National Council for Mental Wellbeing, Washington, D.C.

May 2017-December 2019

- Provided thought leadership to the field for behavioral healthcare financing, integration, data-driven decision making, and population health management
- Oversaw the consulting portfolio and provided strategic leadership in business development related to financing, integration and trauma-informed care
- Partnered with corporate sponsors and providers to unearth innovative practices and accelerate transformation
- Managed approximately 60 government and privately-funded initiatives to enable quality improvement and workforce development in mental health and addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery organizations

- Provided department leadership and directed work activities for approximately 40 staff
- Recommended new and modified healthcare policy and procedure to support sustainability for behavioral healthcare providers
- Developed technical assistance to bolster the success of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) model, a federal demonstration designed to increase access to mental health and addiction treatment and improve health outcomes for these vulnerable populations
- Developed curriculum for the Practice Transformation Academy (PTA), a successful approach to support organizations transform and thrive in a value-based payment environment. The PTA has been adopted and adapted to New York State, Washington State, Michigan and national audiences
- Led the federal and state policy agenda focused on Medicare and Medicaid finance reform initiatives

Clinical Advisor, National Council for Mental Wellbeing, Washington, D.C.

December 2015-May 2017

- Provided clinical expertise and advisement for the Care Transitions Network, a Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) funded program working to reduce all-cause re-hospitalization rates for people with Serious Mental Illness and prepare organizations for value-based payment arrangements in New York State Medicaid
- Designed, developed and managed the technical assistance and curriculum for the Care Transitions Network, recognized by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services as a best model of training and technical assistance to support payment transformation, service delivery and quality of care
- Leveraged qualitative and quantitative research design methods to assess the effectiveness of a behavioral health care coordination model that led to a reduction in Medicaid spending

Director of Clinic Services, Liberty Resources Inc., Syracuse, NY

July 2014-December 2015

- Launched an integrated primary care and behavioral health clinic providing a full array of services including primary care, mental health, substance use and medication assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid addiction and an operating staff of over 100 clinicians

- Led administrative and clinical oversight and operations of four outpatient clinics and 12 school satellite clinics
- Assumed management responsibility for a failing outpatient mental health clinic with a 500% growth rate in 12 months and financial sustainability in 11 months
- In alignment with state Medicaid reform goals, implemented risk reduction strategies leading to a decrease in emergency room visits and inpatient hospital stays
- Transformed outpatient service operations to drive efficiencies, meet quality goals and improve access to care
- Responsible for clinic finances and budget. Inclusive of negotiation, oversight and compliance with commercial payer and managed care contracts and Medicare and Medicaid regulations
- Represented the organization in NYS DSRIP Medicaid reform committees and efforts
- Led the implementation of Medicaid Health Home Services and Medicaid Managed Care
- Executed a population health approach to clinic services through implementation of same-day access to care, risk stratification, care pathways for complex patients, and care coordination
- Prepared outpatient services to meet requirements to achieve Federally Qualified Health Center and Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic status in Medicaid
- Procured and implemented an integrated EHR platform

Implementation Support Center Director, New York Foundling, New York, NY

October 2012-July 2014

- Designed and directed the Implementation Support Center for the New York Foundling: a center designed to support the adherent implementation and scaling of evidence-based programs to reduce violence for youth nationally and internationally (e.g. FFT, MST, BSFT, MDFT) at the intersection of primary care, behavioral health, juvenile justice, criminal justice and child welfare
- Applied a flexible framework to adapt clinical and implementation protocols to the local context as needed
- Collaborated and negotiated with policy makers, organizational leaders and community stakeholders to remove barriers, align policy and practice, and ensure adherent implementation of evidence-based programs
- Secured funding to support the spread and scale of evidence-based programs

- Designed and directed an FFT national and international externship training site for advanced clinical training

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) Expert, New York Foundling, New York, NY

February 2009-October 2012

- Developed, implemented and scaled behavior change protocols designed to eliminate substance use, physical abuse and neglect behaviors with system involved families nationally and internationally
- Clinical and administrative leader for the Blue Sky Project, an RCT studying the continuum of community interventions and evidence-based clinical protocols at reducing recidivism in youth and emerging adult populations
- Supervised and coached administrators and clinical leads to implement the FFT model across five boroughs of NYC and 15 clinical teams (approximately 300 staff)
- Provided clinical treatment to children and families impacted by the juvenile justice, child welfare and foster care systems
- Clinical training tapes adopted as an example of best practice and high fidelity for national and international training

Functional Family Therapy Therapist and Supervisor, New York Foundling, New York, NY

June 2007-February 2009

- Provided direct clinical services to children and families with youth adjudicated as high-risk delinquents (e.g. homicide, sex trafficking, and robbery)
- Oversaw a clinical team of 10 therapists administering behavior change protocols designed to reduce recidivism for youth and families
- Managed risk and clinical recommendations for over 200 families at a given time
- Collaborated with probation, child welfare, judicial, and other stakeholders to ensure community and family safety
- Testified in family and criminal court to provide updates on treatment progress

Social Worker, Our Lady of Mercy Hospital (Montefiore Health System), Bronx, New York

June 2006-June 2007

- Provided behavioral health counseling (e.g. substance use, mental health, HIV counseling) for a broad range of inpatient and outpatient populations

- Provided care coordination and transition planning for high-risk patient populations on the medical and surgical units of a high-density and safety-net hospital
- Collaborated with an integrated clinical team to improve outcomes for high-risk, Medicaid and dual eligible populations

Therapist and Intern, Northside Center for Childhood Development New York, New York

September 2005-June 2007

- Provided behavioral health counseling for a broad range of individual and families
- Led individual and group behavioral health sessions
- Collaborated with care team to provide diagnostic recommendations

Social Work Intern, Legal Aid Society, Brooklyn, New York

September 2004- June 2005

- Provided diagnostic and forensic review of cases
- Provided recommendations and expert testimony

Mental Health Counselor, Fairfax County, Virginia

September 2003-August 2004

- Led milieu therapy approach for individuals with co-occurring disorders
- Supported psychiatric diagnosis and treatment planning for all residents

Education

Fordham University, MSW, May 2006

Loyola University in Maryland, BA, May 2003

Publications

Finke, B.; Davidson, K.; Rawal, P. *Addressing Challenges in Primary Care-Lessons to Guide Innovation*. JAMA Health Forum. 2022

Fowler, E.; Rudolph, N.; Davidson, K; Finke, B.; Flood, S.; Bernheim, S.; Rawal, P. *Accelerating Care Delivery Transformation-The CMS Innovation Center's Role in the Next Decade*. NEJM Catalyst. 2023.

Awards

*Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Honor Award, Positive Deviance
Methodology 2025*

Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Honors Award, Making Care Primary 2023

*Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation Center Director's Award, Contributions to
Strategy Refresh 2022*