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SEPTEMBER 17-18, 2026

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CE Information:

ACHE: As an independent chartered chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives, the Hawaii-Pacific Chapter is authorized to award 3.0 hours of ACHE In Person Education credit toward advancement or recertification in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

Additionally, and as an independent chartered chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives, the Hawaii-Pacific Chapter of ACHE, is seeking approval of a total of **6.0 hours of ACHE Qualifying Education credits** toward advancement or recertification in the American College of Healthcare Executives. Participants in this program who wish to have it considered for ACHE Qualifying Education credit should list their attendance when they apply to the American College of Healthcare Executives for advancement or recertification.

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Conference Registration rates

HAHRM/ACHE Member Rate	**$250**
Non-Member Rate	**$275**
Virtual Attendance Member rate:	**$200**
Virtual Attendance Non-Member rate:	**$225**

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If hotel accommodations are needed, the conference has a preferred room rate at the **Queen Kapiolani Hotel.** For rate information and registration, email **iberry@queenkapiolani.com**

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Thursday 9/17 Schedule at Glance		
7:30 - 8:30 am	Breakfast/Networking	
8:30 - 8:50 am	Welcome	Gregg Timmons, HAHRM Keith Izawa, ACHE
8:50 - 9:30 am	Welcome from ASHRM	Karen Markwith, ASHRM President-Elect
8:45 - 10:00 am	Opening Keynote: Supporting Clinicians With Persistent and Severe Professionalism Concerns Through Real Leadership and a Plan	Gerald B. Hickson, Vanderbilt Health
10:15 - 10:30 am	Break	
10:30 am - noon	ACHE Panel Presentation: From Blueprint to Bedside: Building and Sustaining a Culture of Safety and Professional Accountability	Gerald B. Hickson Kuo-Chiang Lian & Whitney Limm, Queen's Health System
Noon - 1 pm	Lunch/HAHRM Business Meeting/Networking	
1 - 2:15 pm	Transforming Risk Identification into Organizational Improvement: The Importance of the Leadership in Environment of Care and Risk Rounding	John Walpole, Gallagher Insurance
2:15 - 2:30 pm	Break	
2:30 - 3:45 pm	Preparing for the 2027 TJC Sentinel Event Transition: Aligning w/ the NQF Serious Reportable Event Framework	Angela Peachy
3:45 - 4:00 pm	Closing remarks/Adjourn	

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Friday 9/18 Schedule at at Glance		
8:00 - 8:30 am	Breakfast/Networking	
8:30 - 9:30 am	Emergency Management/Disaster Preparedness & Response	Mitchell Saruwatari, Kaiser Permanente
9:30 - 11:00 am	ACHE Panel Presentation - Access, Capacity, and Patient Safety: A Statewide Conversation on Strengthening Healthcare for All	David Isei; Esther Smith, MD; Scott Grosskreutz, MD; Jack Lewin, MD
11:00 - 11:15 am	Break	
11:15 am- 12:15 pm	Straight Talk with Defense Counsel: Behind the Case Files - Insights from the Defense Table	Jarett A. Dempsey, Cades Schutte Law Firm
12:15 - 1:30 pm	Lunch/Networking	
1:30 - 2:30 pm	Sailing Through the 2026 Legislative Session: Key Updates and Impacts	Jacce S. Mikulanec, Queen's Health System
2:30 - 3:30 pm	Closing Keynote - Beyond the Wave: Leadership, Courage, and the Commitment to Serve Others	Bryan Phillips, Ocean Safety Advocate
3:30 - 3:45 pm	Closing Remarks - Farewell	

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OPENING KEYNOTE

"SUPPORTING CLINICIANS WITH PERSISTENT AND SEVERE PROFESSIONALISM CONCERNS THROUGH REAL LEADERSHIP AND A PLAN"

GERALD B. HICKSON, MD

Founding Director
Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy
Vanderbilt University Medical Center



Join Dr. Gerald Hickson, internationally recognized physician leader and founder of the Vanderbilt Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy's Professionalism Program, for an engaging presentation on how healthcare organizations can strengthen culture, improve patient safety, and reduce organizational risk through professional accountability.

Drawing upon decades of research and practical implementation, Dr. Hickson will discuss evidence-based strategies for identifying and addressing disruptive/unprofessional behaviors, supporting peer accountability, and creating systems that support respectful communication and high-reliability performance. Organizations implementing Vanderbilt's professionalism framework have demonstrated reductions in malpractice risk and associated costs, improvements in clinical and surgical outcomes, stronger teamwork and organizational culture, and enhanced physician and staff retention. Attendees will gain practical insights into building a culture where professionalism is actively supported, concerns are addressed early and constructively, and healthcare teams are empowered to deliver safer, higher-quality patient care.

Gerald B. Hickson, MD *is the Joseph C. Ross Chair of Medical Education and Administration, Professor of Pediatrics, and Founding Director of the Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy (CPPA) at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.*

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10:30 am - Noon

ACHE Panel Presentation - From Blueprint to Bedside: Building and Sustaining a Culture of Safety and Professional Accountability

Gerald B. Hickson, MD
Founding Director, Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy, Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Kuo-Chiang Lian, MD
Chief of Staff, The Queen's Health Systems

Whitney Limm, MD
Executive Vice President of Clinical Integration and Chief Physician Executive, The Queen's Health Systems

Session description: Achieving total system safety requires more than policy — it requires a culture where professionalism, accountability, and respect are actively measured, modeled, and sustained at every level of the organization. This panel examines how healthcare organizations can use key patient safety principles — including leadership commitment, transparency, psychological safety, and accountability — to move from aspiration to sustained practice.

Gerald B. Hickson, MD, Founding Director of the Vanderbilt Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy, will moderate a discussion with Kuo-Chiang Lian, MD, and Whitney Limm, MD, of The Queen's Health Systems. The panelists will share their organization's experience implementing the Patient Advocacy Reporting System (PARS) and Coworker Observation Reporting System (CORS). These evidence-based tools use patient, family, and coworker observations to identify and support the small group of professionals whose behavior threatens team performance, patient safety, and organizational reliability.

Panelists will discuss how tiered, peer-driven intervention models can reduce malpractice risk, decrease adverse events, curb staff turnover, and strengthen a culture of mutual respect — while candidly addressing the practical and cultural challenges of implementation. The session will close with facilitated audience Q&A, giving participants the opportunity to explore how these strategies might translate to their own organizations' safety and accountability journeys.

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1:00 - 2:15 pm

Transforming Risk Identification into Organizational Improvement: The Importance of the Leadership in Environment of Care and Risk Rounding

John Walpole
Area Senior Vice President, Healthcare at Gallagher Insurance

Session description: Environment of Care and Risk Rounding programs are only as strong as the leadership behind them — when engagement lags, hazards can go unnoticed. This presentation is designed to provide Risk Managers and program leaders with practical, hands-on guidance for leading and supporting Environment of Care managers, subcommittee leaders, and committees. Attendees will learn how constructive leadership techniques can strengthen collaboration, improve engagement, and uncover previously unidentified organizational risks. The session will also explore strategies for enhancing Risk Rounding activities to identify meaningful exposures and opportunities for improvement. In addition, participants will gain tools for developing performance-based programs and committees that drive measurable results. Finally, the presentation will address how to effectively prepare and present program outcomes to organizational leadership, accrediting agencies, and during audits or program reviews.

2:30 - 3:45 pm

Preparing for the 2027 Joint Commission Sentinel Event Transition: Aligning with the National Quality Forum Serious Reportable Event Framework

Angela Peachy, BHA, CPHRM, CPXP, APPRC
Corporate Director of Risk Management, Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation

Session description: Beginning January 1, 2027, Joint Commission–accredited organizations will transition to a new national framework for Serious Reportable Events, replacing a reporting structure that has remained largely unchanged since 2011. This session provides a practical overview of the updated framework, including the new event categories, revised definitions, and newly added reportable events that will affect healthcare organizations across the continuum of care. Participants will learn how these changes will impact event reporting, policies, documentation, data systems, staff education, and regulatory compliance. The presentation will also outline a practical implementation roadmap to help organizations prepare for the transition while maintaining accurate reporting and meaningful trend data. Whether you work in risk management, quality, patient safety, accreditation, or healthcare leadership, this session will provide actionable strategies to help your organization successfully navigate one of the most significant patient safety reporting changes in more than a decade.

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Friday, September 18
8:30 - 9:30 am
Emergency Management/Disaster Preparedness & Response

Mitchell Saruwatari, Director of National Emergency Management for Kaiser Permanente

Session description: Recent disasters across Hawai‘i, including wildfires, flooding, and tsunami threats, have highlighted the importance of effective emergency preparedness and coordinated response across the healthcare continuum. This session will examine key lessons learned from these events, including incident command activation, evacuation challenges, communication gaps, and the unique needs of vulnerable populations such as long-term care residents and home health patients.

Participants will explore how leadership decisions, organizational culture, and timely escalation can significantly influence response efforts during rapidly evolving emergencies. The discussion will also address practical strategies for strengthening preparedness, improving coordination across healthcare organizations, and enhancing resilience before, during, and after disasters. While grounded in Hawai‘i's recent experiences, the lessons and best practices presented are broadly applicable to healthcare organizations preparing for emergencies in any community.

9:30 - 11:00 am
ACHE Panel Presentation – Access, Capacity, and Patient Safety: A Statewide Conversation on Strengthening Healthcare for All

David Isei, MPH, MAOL, PMP, Executive Director, Hawai‘i Healthcare Task Force;

Esther Smith, MD, Vice President, Hawai‘i Healthcare Task Force; family physician, Kailua-Kona

John C. (Jack) Lewin, MD — Administrator, State Health Planning and Development Agency, Hawai‘i Department of Health

Scott Grosskreutz, MD, FACR — President, Hawai‘i Healthcare Task Force; diagnostic radiologist, Benioff Hilo Medical Center

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Session description: Healthcare organizations across Hawai‘i — regardless of size, structure, or affiliation — share a common set of pressures: an aging and undersized physician workforce, provider directories that don't always reflect real-world capacity, and administrative burdens that consume clinical time better spent on patients. This panel brings together frontline and system-levelperspectives to examine these three interconnected challenges and their impact on patient access, continuity of care, and organizational risk. Panelists will discuss what these issues look like in daily practice, how they affect clinicians and patients alike, and where practical, collaborative opportunities exist to close the gaps — through better data accuracy, communication, and coordination among providers, health systems, and payers.

This session will also introduce the Hawai‘i Healthcare Information Platform (HIP), a communication and resource-coordination tool designed to support situational awareness and preparedness for organizations of any size, before, during, and after emergencies.

11:15 am- 12:15 pm

Straight Talk with Defense Council: Behind the Case Files - Insights from the Defense Table

Jarrett A. Dempsey, Esq., *Cades Schutte Law Firm*

Session description: In this interactive discussion, Jarrett Dempsey, a veteran defense attorney will examine the factors that distinguish a resilient defense from a compromised one. Moving beyond traditional lecture formats, this engaging Q&A session explores the practical realities of litigation and highlights how risk managers and clinical leaders can proactively influence outcomes. Discussion topics include critical strategies for evidence preservation, the nuances of privileged investigations, and common documentation pitfalls within electronic medical records that often impact legal proceedings. This session will also provide unique perspectives on deposition trends and the attributes of compelling physician and nurse witnesses. Participants will gain actionable insights into strengthening documentation practices, safeguarding legal privilege, and supporting counsel to build more defensible cases. Designed for professionals in risk management, quality, and healthcare administration, this session offers practical tools to enhance organizational defense long before a claim enters the courtroom.

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1:30 - 2:30 pm

Sailing Through the 2026 Legislative Seas: Key Updates and Impacts

Jacce S. Mikulanec, Director of Government Relations, Queen's Health Systems

Session description: Hawai'i's 2026 Legislative Session has introduced important developments that will shape healthcare policy, funding, and regulatory priorities across the islands. In this session, we are honored to have Jacce S. Mikulanec, Director of Government Relations at The Queen's Health Systems present. He will provide timely insights on key bills, emerging themes, and their potential impact on providers and patients. Attendees will gain a practical understanding of legislative trends and strategies for navigating change in a complex policy environment. This discussion offers a unique opportunity to hear directly from both a legislative leader and a healthcare advocate at the intersection of policy and practice.

CLOSING KEYNOTE: "LESSONS FROM THE OCEAN: LEADERSHIP, PREPAREDNESS, AND THE PURSUIT OF SAFETY"

Bryan Scott Phillips, Ocean Emergency Management Leader/ Safety Advocate



Protecting lives is a calling that extends far beyond the walls of a hospital. In this engaging closing keynote conversation, renowned North Shore ocean safety leader Bryan Philips joins us to explore the striking parallels between ocean rescue and healthcare, drawing on a career of high-stakes decisions in unpredictable environments. Bryan will share lessons on risk recognition, teamwork, communication, and building cultures where safety is everyone's responsibility — principles that apply equally to rescuing swimmers in the surf and protecting patients in healthcare organizations.

Through an interactive interview and audience discussion, attendees will discover how organizations can move beyond reacting to crises and instead build systems that anticipate risk, empower people to speak up, and prepare teams to perform when it matters most — leaving with a renewed perspective on leadership, collaboration, and the shared mission of protecting lives.

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Speaker Biographies

***Jarrett A. Dempsey, Esq**., is a partner with the Cade Schutte law firm in Honolulu.His practice focuses on medical malpractice litigation, healthcare law, and insurance defense, representing hospitals, physicians, nurses, clinics, surgery centers, and other healthcare providers in complex litigation and regulatory matters. His experience includes medical negligence claims, medical staff credentialing, regulatory compliance, and disputes involving electronic medical records and electronically stored information. He also advises healthcare organizations on corporate and operational legal issues.*

Jarrett earned his law degree, summa cum laude, from the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai'i, where he also served on the University of Hawai'i Law Review. He is active in the Hawai'i legal community and has held leadership roles with the Hawai'i State Bar Association. His practice provides healthcare organizations with practical legal guidance on managing risk and defending complex claims.

***Scott Grosskreutz, MD, FACR,** is a diagnostic radiologist with Hawaii Radiologic Associates in Hilo, focusing on breast and musculoskeletal imaging. He is board certified in diagnostic radiology and a Fellow of the American College of Radiology. He has served as chief of staff and chair of radiology at Hilo Medical Center and as president of the Hawai'i Radiological Society. Dr. Grosskreutz helped organize the Hawai'i Physician Shortage Crisis Task Force and is President of the Hawai'i Healthcare Task Force. He has testified at the Hawai'i Legislature on the physician shortage, primary care funding, prompt claims payment, and the general excise tax on medical services. He earned his medical degree at the University of North Dakota.*

***Gerald B. Hickson, MD** is the Joseph C. Ross Chair of Medical Education and Administration, Professor of Pediatrics, and Founding Director of the Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy (CPPA) at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.*

Dr. Hickson joined the Department of Pediatrics at Vanderbilt in 1982. He has served as Chief of the Division of General Pediatrics, Director of Clinical Risk and Loss Prevention, and Senior Vice President of Quality, Safety and Risk Prevention for Vanderbilt University Medical Center. In addition, Dr. Hickson has developed educational initiatives to promote disclosure of adverse events and medical errors, address behaviors that undermine a culture of safety, and promote and sustain high performing teams.

Dr. Hickson serves as immediate past Chair of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI). He also serves on the Board of Directors of Keck (USC) Health System. Dr. Hickson received a BS from the University of Georgia and MD from Tulane University School of Medicine.

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David Isei, MPH, MAOL, PMP *is a healthcare executive, consultant, and Hawai'i Air National Guard veteran with extensive experience leading healthcare transformation and complex organizational initiatives. He is the founder of ISEI Consulting LLC and Chief Executive Officer of Mohala Health Group. He also serves as Executive Director of the Hawai'i Healthcare Task Force and Manager of Lokahi Health LLC, where he advances value-based care reform through Hawai'i's CMS LEAD Model Accountable Care Organization (ACO) initiative to improve patient outcomes statewide. David's leadership experience spans healthcare, government, and military organizations, providing him with a practical perspective on organizational change, operations, and strategic collaboration. He holds a Master of Public Health and a Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership and is certified as both a Project Management Professional (PMP) and Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR).*

John C. "Jack" Lewin, MD, *has led the State Health Planning and Development Agency at the Hawai'i Department of Health since 2023 and is Senior Advisor to the Governor on healthcare innovation. In 2026 he oversaw the agency's first legislatively required report on prior authorization practices under Act 151 (2025). Dr. Lewin was Hawai'i's Director of Health from 1986 to 1994. He later served as CEO of the California Medical Association, the American College of Cardiology, and the Cardiovascular Research Foundation, and as chairman of the National Coalition on Health Care. Earlier, he practiced with the Indian Health Service on the Navajo Nation and was medical director of Kula Hospital on Maui. He earned his medical degree at the University of Southern California.*

Kuo-Chiang Lian, MD *was born in Lubbock, Texas, and was raised in central Illinois, where his father was a professor of special education at Illinois State University and his mother was a deaf preschool teacher. He attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, graduating with a degree in Chemistry, and acquired his medical degree at the University of California, San Francisco. He completed internship, residency, and chief residency in Internal Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles, joining the faculty as a hospitalist following. Kuo joined the hospitalist program at The Queen's Medical Center and the faculty at the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) in 2011 and currently serves clinically as a dedicated teaching hospitalist on the Queen's Manamana campus. He served previously as Chief of Medicine at Queen's and as the medical director of the Queen's Hospitalist Program and Queen's Medical Group. Dr. Kuo currently serves as the Chief of Staff at Queen's and holds a faculty appointment as Assistant Professor of Medicine at JABSOM.*

Whitney Limm, M.D., FACS *is the Executive Vice President of Clinical Integration and Chief Physician Executive of The Queen's Health Systems (QHS). He has been part of QHS since 1991. In his current role, Dr. Limm's areas of responsibility include the Quality, Medical Staff Services, and Academic Affairs Departments; Diagnostic Laboratory Services (DLS); and the Queen's Clinically Integrated Physician Network (QCIPN). Dr. Limm received*

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his Bachelor of Science degree from Stanford University and his medical degree from the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Limm previously served as Chief of General Surgery and Medical Director of Surgery at The Queen's Medical Center. He is the former President of the Hawaii Chapter of the American College of Surgeons. He is an Associate Professor of Surgery at the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawai'i, where he is actively involved in teaching medical students and residents. He was named the Hawai'i Medical Association's Physician of the Year in 2024 and has been consistently recognized on Honolulu Magazine's list of Best Doctors in Hawai'i.

***Karen Markwith, RN, MJ, CPHRM, CHSP, CPPS FASHRM** is the current President-Elect for ASHRM for 2027. She currently serves as the Northwest Region Director of Risk Management and Loss Prevention for the Common Spirit Health System. Her experience includes prior national roles as National Director of Enterprise Risk Management for Catholic Health Initiatives for WA and Oregon and Director of Risk Services for Franciscan Health System. Ms. Markwith earned a MJ in Health Law from Loyola Law School in Chicago and a BS in Nursing from Pacific Lutheran University. She has co-authored several ASHRM national educational resources. Karen is also a Washington Healthcare Risk Manager Society (WHCRMS) Western WA Trustee board member for 2024-2026.*

***Jacce S. Mikulanec** serves as the Director of Government Relations for The Queen's Health System. He previously served as president and executive director of the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i, Manager of Government Relations for the Hawai'i Medical Service Association and worked as the Policy and Community Partnership Director at the Hawaii nonprofit supporting early learning, Good Beginnings Alliance (now the Hawaii Children's Action Network). He previously served as the Special Assistant on Policy for Lieutenant Governor Brian Schatz. Mikulanec earned his Master of Arts degree in Anthropology, with an emphasis on Easter Island archaeology, from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa.*

***Angela Peachy, BHA, CPHRM, CPXP, APPRC** is the Corporate Director of Risk Management for the Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation. She has more than 20 years of healthcare experience in hospital operations, clinical care, and risk management. Angela earned a Bachelor's degree in Healthcare Administration from Grand Canyon University and holds multiple professional certifications, including CPHRM (Certified Professional in Healthcare Risk Management), CPXP (Certified Patient Experience Professional), and APPRC (Advanced Professional in Patient Relations Certification).*

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Angela currently serves as President of the California Association of Patient Relations, Vice President of the Hawai'i Association of Healthcare Risk Management, and is a Past President of the Southern California Association of Healthcare Risk Management. She is also actively involved with the American Society for Health Care Risk Management (ASHRM), serving on the National ASHRM Education Committee.

***Bryan Scott Phillips** is a seasoned public safety and emergency management professional with more than 20 years of experience in ocean safety, search and rescue, and crisis leadership. He currently serves as an Ocean Safety Lifeguard with the County of Hawai'i and is the owner of Nearshore Tactics and Rescue, where he provides advanced training in ocean rescue, risk management, and emergency response. Bryan has served as President of the Hawai'i Government Employees Association (HGEA) Bargaining Unit 5 and President of the North Shore Lifeguard Association, leading statewide negotiations and advancing public safety initiatives. A highly respected instructor and speaker,he holds numerous FEMA, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, EMT, and NASBLA certifications. His distinguished career includes providing protective lifeguard services for President Barack Obama and receiving the City and County of Honolulu Valor Award and Honolulu Employee of the Year honors.*

***Mitchell W. Saruwatari** is the Director of National Emergency Management for Kaiser Permanente, where he leads enterprisewide emergency preparedness, response, and resilience operations across regional and national command centers. He has nearly three decades of experience in healthcare, public health, and emergency management, with expertise in incident management, business continuity, regulatory compliance, and large-scale disaster response. Mitch is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Master of Science in Emergency Management program at the University of Southern California and an instructor and curriculum developer with FEMA's Center for Domestic Preparedness. He is a published author on healthcare emergency preparedness, continuity planning, disaster exercises, and emergency management standards, with work appearing through the American Hospital Association, peer-reviewed journals, and national emergency management publications.*

***Esther Smith, MD** With over eighteen years of work experience, Dr. Smith is a passionate and dedicated owner and physician at Dr. Smith Family Medicine, where she provides high-quality and holistic care to patients of all ages and backgrounds. She is a physician and skilled in family development, which enables her to understand and address the diverse needs and challenges of families in my community. Dr. Smith*

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partners with local schools, organizations, and health centers to promote health education, prevention, and wellness among families. Her core competencies include diagnosis, treatment, management, and referral of various medical conditions, as well as communication, leadership, and collaboration. Her mission is to improve the health and well-being of families through compassionate, evidence-based, and personalized care.

John Walpole, *Area Senior Vice President – Healthcare at Gallagher Insurance, brings more than 30 years of healthcare risk management experience. A nationally recognized speaker, John has presented for ASHRM and numerous state healthcare risk management organizations, sharing practical, hands-on guidance for leading and managing clinical and operational risk programs.*

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