Speaker Biographies

Michael A. Grandner, PhD, MTR, CBSM

Dr. Grandner is a licensed Psychologist certified in Behavioral Sleep Medicine, Director of the Sleep and Health Research Program at the University of Arizona, where he is Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Psychology, and Medicine. His research focuses on downstream cardiometabolic and neurobehavioral risk factors associated with insufficient sleep in real-world situations, upstream social, behavioral, and environmental risk factors of insufficient sleep, and behavioral interventions for healthy sleep to prevent cardiometabolic disease risk. He has won awards for his research from the Sleep Research Society, American Academy of Sleep Medicine, Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine, American Heart Association, and other organizations. He has over 90 journal publications, is Associate Editor for the journal Sleep Health, and serves on the Mental Health Task Force for the NCAA.

Chandra L. Jackson, PhD, MS

Dr. Chandra L. Jackson, from Atlanta, Georgia, is an Epidemiologist and incoming Earl Stadtman Investigator at the National Institutes of Health in the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences with a joint appointment in the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities. She earned a Master’s degree in Epidemiology from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, a PhD in Epidemiology from The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and was an Alonzo Smythe Yerby Postdoctoral Fellow in the Nutrition Department at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health before becoming a Research Associate in the Harvard Catalyst Clinical and Translational Science Center.

She has certificates in both ‘Health Disparities and Health Inequalities’ as well as ‘Community-based Public Health’ from Johns Hopkins, and is interested in translating epidemiologic evidence into interventions, policies, and practices that improve population health and address health disparities. As a former White House Intern working in both the National Economic and Domestic Policy Councils during the Obama administration, she researched and synthesized public health evidence that informed, for example, program decisions for the First Lady’s Let’s Move! Campaign.

Dr. Jackson’s latest research focuses on social determinants of sleep health as a potential major modifiable contributor to costly and preventable health disparities in chronic obesity-related conditions. Her research has been presented at national scientific conferences and published in both academic journals like JAMA Internal Medicine and the American Journal of Epidemiology as well as major media outlets including the US News & World Report and The New York Times. She has earned merit-based awards, including the Charlotte Silverman Award for outstanding commitment to public health, policy, and community outreach at Johns Hopkins and an Outstanding Fellows Award at Harvard.
Sanjay R. Patel, MD, MS

Sanjay R. Patel, MD, MS is a Visiting Professor of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh. He is a physician-scientist whose research focuses on the bidirectional relationships between sleep and obesity. His research has included studying the epidemiologic relationships between sleep and obesity in large cohorts and identifying metabolic effects of sleep-related exposures on adipose tissue and obesity-related hormones. He has also been interested in using weight loss interventions to treat sleep disorders. He is currently director of the Center for Sleep and Cardiovascular Outcomes Research at the University of Pittsburgh and also directs the Comprehensive Sleep Disorders Clinic at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center where he cares for patients with sleep disorders.

Elsie M. Taveras, MD, MPH

Elsie M. Taveras, MD, MPH is Chief of the Division of General Academic Pediatrics and Director of Pediatric Population Health Management at Massachusetts General Hospital. She is also Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Population Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Associate Professor of Nutrition at Harvard School of Public Health. She received her Bachelor of Science and MD degrees from New York University. After receiving her MD, she did her internship, residency, and chief residency, at the Boston Combined Residency Program at Boston Children’s Hospital and Boston Medical Center in Pediatrics. Dr. Taveras also holds a Master's in Public Health from the Harvard School of Public Health.

Dr. Taveras is a Pediatrician and a childhood obesity researcher. Her main focus of research is understanding determinants of obesity in women and children and developing interventions across the lifecourse to prevent obesity, especially in underserved populations. Her work spans the spectrum of observational studies and interventions—to identify and quantify risk factors—and to modify these risk factors for health promotion and disease prevention. She has published over 140 research studies and served on Committees for the Institutes of Medicine to develop recommendations for prevention of obesity in early life and for evaluating the progress of national obesity prevention efforts.

Scott I. Kahan, MD, MPH (Moderator)

Scott I. Kahan, MD, MPH, is the Director of the Strategies To Overcome and Prevent (STOP) Obesity Alliance. Dr. Kahan's clinical practice and research addresses obesity prevention and treatment, chronic disease risk reduction, health behavior change in populations, and clinical aspects of weight management. His public policy work focuses on expanding access to care for obesity treatment services, addressing weight stigma, and training physicians in obesity treatment modalities. Dr. Kahan holds a faculty appointment at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, where he has served as Associate Director of the Johns Hopkins University
Weight Management Center and as a member of the core faculty of the Preventive Medicine Residency Program. He also holds a faculty appointment at the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services, is a Clinical Professor at George Washington University School of Medicine, and previously served as Co-Director of the George Washington University Weight Management Center. Dr. Kahan is a Fellow of The Obesity Society and a Diplomat of the American Board of Preventive Medicine. Dr. Kahan received a B.S. in Bioengineering from Columbia University and received his medical degree from the Medical College of Pennsylvania, now Drexel University College of Medicine. He completed a residency at Johns Hopkins University, where he served as Chief Resident. Dr. Kahan received his Masters of Public Health degree from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He is board-certified in preventive medicine and obesity medicine. Dr. Kahan is also board certified as a Physician Nutrition Specialist.