COVID-19 Lessons to Inform Pandemic Influenza Response

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Speaker Biographies

Phyllis Arthur, MBA, is Vice President for Infectious Diseases and Diagnostics Policy at the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO). In this role Ms. Arthur is responsible for working with member companies in vaccines, antimicrobial resistance, molecular diagnostics and biodefense on policy, legislative and regulatory issues. Ms. Arthur joined BIO in July 2009 as the Director of Healthcare Regulatory Affairs. Prior to joining BIO, she worked in numerous marketing and sales positions for Merck & Co Inc in their Vaccine Division. Over her 16-year career at Merck, Ms. Arthur launched several exciting new vaccines in the United States and internationally, including the first HPV vaccine, GARDASIL. During her years in Marketing, she worked closely with clinical and academic thought leaders in infectious diseases, oncology and public health. In addition, Ms. Arthur also led a large vaccine sales organization of over 75 representatives and managers covering 14 states.

Priya Bahri, Ph.D., at EMA since 1996, is now EMA's lead for pharmacovigilance guidelines (EU-GVP) and research into risk communication, stakeholder engagement for pharmacovigilance and implementation of risk minimisation in healthcare. In that role she collaborates closely with patient, healthcare professional, academic and industry organisations as well as WHO and CIOMS working groups. She was topic lead for the CIOMS Guide on Vaccine Safety Communication and co-lead of the communication recommendations of the IMI-ADVANCE project on vaccine safety surveillance. She is externally active in the learned societies ISoP and ISPE and as affiliate researcher at the Utrecht WHO Collaborating Centre for Pharmaceutical Policy and Regulation. She is the editor of the Springer textbook "Communicating about Risks and Safe Use of Medicines - Real Life and Applied Research", published in 2020.
Ran D. Balicer M.D., Ph.D., MPH, serves as Chief Innovation Officer for Clalit - Israel's largest healthcare organization. He also serves as Founding Director of the Clalit Research Institute, the WHO Collaborating Center on Non-Communicable Diseases Research, Prevention and Control. In these roles, he is responsible for strategic planning, development and implementation of novel organization-wide interventions and of innovative technology and data-driven tools, for improving healthcare quality, reducing disparities and increasing care effectiveness. Since 2020, Prof. Balicer was appointed Chair of Israel's National Experts Panel on COVID-19 and serves as a senior advisor to the Israeli Government and Prime Minister Office on the COVID-19 pandemic response. Prof Balicer is Full Professor and Track Director of the MPH program at the Ben-Gurion University School of Public Health, Israel, and has been serving as Chair of the Israeli Society for Quality in Healthcare since 2013.

Prof. Balicer serves as Commissioner for the Lancet and Financial Times Healthy Futures 2030 International Commission that aim at harnessing innovation globally to improve the health and wellbeing of young individuals. He also serves in senior advisory groups to the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe, and is involved in projects focusing on chronic diseases monitoring, prevention and control, use of big data and artificial intelligence in healthcare provision and care integration.

Maria Elena Bottazzi, Ph.D., is Associate Dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine, Professor of Pediatrics and Co-director of Texas Children’s Center for Vaccine Development at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas.

She is an internationally recognized vaccine scientist and global health advocate with more than two decades of contributions in science, biotechnology and vaccine development tackling neglected and emerging infectious diseases. As global thought-leader she has received national and international highly regarded awards, has more than 180 scientific papers and participated in more than 250 conferences worldwide. In 2020, Forbes selected her as one of 100 Most Powerful Women in Central America. Dr. Bottazzi is Member of the National Academy of Science of Honduras and an Emerging Leader in Health and Medicine Scholar of the National Academy of Medicine in the US.

Currently she serves as Co-chair of the Vaccines and Therapeutics Taskforce of the Lancet Commission on COVID-19. Dr. Bottazzi obtained her bachelor’s degree in Microbiology and Clinical Chemistry from the National Autonomous University of Honduras and a doctorate in Molecular Immunology and Experimental Pathology from the University of Florida. Her post-doctoral training in Cellular Biology was completed at University of Miami and Pennsylvania.

Sergio Cecchini, M.Sc., is currently working for the World Health Organisation as Infodemic Management Officer and Coordinator of the Africa Infodemic Response Alliance. Mr. Cecchini has 20 years of experience in the international humanitarian aid sector, covering several managerial communication positions at headquarters and field level for Médecins Sans Frontières.
During his career, he developed an intensive experience in crisis communication covering post-disaster, conflicts and outbreaks' emergency responses and developing multi-stakeholders communication and engagement strategies to raise the organisation's public profiles and support advocacy and operational plans. Mr. Cecchini's academic background is based on an MSc in Communication Science and an ongoing MA in Global Security and Strategy at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) of the University of London. He provided lectures at the Communication and Social Research Department of the University of Rome "La Sapienza" and at the Sant'Anna School in Advanced Studies' International Training Programme for Conflict Management.

Benjamin Cowling, Ph.D., is currently Professor and head of the Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics in the School of Public Health at the University of Hong Kong, and co-Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Control. He conducts research into the epidemiology of influenza and other respiratory viruses, with a focus on transmission dynamics and the effectiveness of control measures including vaccination. Since early 2020 he has conducted research on the epidemiology and control of COVID-19 including highly cited publications in NEJM, Science and Nature Medicine. He has authored more than 450 peer-reviewed journal publications to date. He is Editor-in-Chief of *Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses*, and an Associate Editor of the journal *Emerging Infectious Diseases*. His work is supported by a number of major grants from funding bodies in Hong Kong and the United States.

Carolyn Finkle, M.Sc., has over 35 years scientific and industry experience including 29 years in management of drug and biologic development, regulatory affairs, quality, pharmacovigilance, clinical development, manufacturing and commercialization for companies in the U.S., UK and Canada, including Chief Operating Officer, Medicago, VP Regulatory Affairs, Karyopharm, Head of Commercial, Kinapse, SVP Regulatory Affairs, inVentiv Health, VP, Global Regulatory Affairs, Catalent Pharma Solutions, Senior Director, International Regulatory Affairs, MedImmune, Vice President, Global Product Development Strategy and VP North America Consulting, PAREXEL International, VP Regulatory Affairs at Celsion Corporation, VP Preclinical Development at TherImmune Research Corporation, VP Drug Development at GeminX Biotechnologies, Director of Preclinical Development at ConjuChem and Manager of Preclinical Development at BioChem Pharma. Carolyn Finkle holds a M.Sc. Chemistry from the University of Toronto, Canada and has a B.Sc. Chemistry from the University of Ottawa, Canada. She has worked in academic research at Stanford University, Toronto General Hospital and Chiba University, Japan, prior to her industry managerial appointments. Carolyn Finkle currently serves as an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University, lecturing the Master’s Program in Clinical and Translational Research, and Course Co-Director for the Pharmaceutical Education and Research Institute (PERI), as well as, Stanford and UCSF Center for Excellence in Regulatory Sciences, and previous contributor to the UCSF American Course of Drug Development and Regulatory Sciences (ACDRS). Carolyn has co-authored 1 book chapter on First-in-Man global regulatory
requirements, over 18 abstracts and 14 papers for industry associations and scientific publications and chaired DIA sessions at the annual meetings. She has received numerous awards and scholarships throughout her career.

**Patricia García, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H.,** is a Professor at the School of Public Health at Cayetano Heredia University (UPCH) in Lima-Peru and member of the US National Academy of Medicine. She is the former Minister of Health of Peru, former Dean of the School of Public Health at UPCH, and former Chief of the Peruvian National Institute of Health (INS). She is recognized as a leader in global health. She is an affiliate Professor with the Department of Global Health at the University of Washington and the School of Public Health at Tulane University. She is actively involved in research and training in global health, reproductive health, STI/HIV, HPV and medical informatics as well as has expertise in public health interventions, infectious diseases, and implementation science. Dr. García is a member of the advisory board of CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations) and is a member of the International Committee, being coordinated by the National Academy of Medicine, that set the statement of task for this consensus study. During the pandemic she is leading clinical trials in Peru as SOLIDARITY, Convalescent plasma and ivermectin use, and has been chairing the advising governmental committee on innovations to fight the pandemic. She is active with the media providing public information about COVID-19 and other health information.

**Denise Gray-Felder, M.A.,** is the founding president and CEO of the Communication for Social Change Consortium, a nonprofit organization working globally to equip people in marginalized communities, using participatory methods at the grassroots level to bring about the social change they define and need. She has held progressively more responsible communication positions during her 40-plus year career including her current position since 2003, four and a half years as chief communication officer for Michigan Medicine (U-Michigan), nine years as a vice president of administration and director of communication for the Rockefeller Foundation, 16 years in progressively more responsible public relations management positions at AT&T, associate director of public relations for the United Way of Detroit, scriptwriter for Criminal Justice Institute-Detroit, promotion coordinator WKBD-TV Detroit, editor and publisher of community publications, radio and TV scriptwriter, and reporter for Lansing State Journal (daily newspaper). Her research interests include community dialogue as a change agent; participatory communication, monitoring and evaluation; storytelling to impact community values, attitudes and beliefs; vaccine hesitancy/influencing anti-vax communities; HIV-AIDS communication; community radio; communication for development; health communication; as well as communication for social and community-level change. She has also work with UNICEF in four northern Nigeria states on polio vaccination, the World Health Organization on tuberculosis, the West African Health Organization on neglected tropical diseases in the Sahel, WaterAid to address clean water communication in four West African countries, the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative to create initial communication plans for aids vaccines, as well as the GIZ on African Shared Values (with African Union), community radio, sanitation. Ms. Gray-Felder has also spent years working with Public
Health Schools Without Walls, girls’ education in Africa, the green revolution in Africa, as well as agricultural sciences in Africa and Asia, Green Revolution for Africa. She is a board member of the Millbank Foundation as well as a former appointee of the M.L. King Commission for State of New Jersey. Her honors include the Spirit of Detroit Award and other recognitions for community service.

Sherine Guirguis, M.Sc., MA, is Common Thread’s Co-founder, Director and lead strategist. Sherine looks for the people behind the data. She’s been creating powerful narratives with data for over 20 years, from leading large-scale behavior change strategies to respond to the Indian Ocean Tsunami, ridding the world of polio, and helping to end West Africa’s Ebola outbreak. For the past year, she’s been helping countries across the world understand Covid-19 perceptions and design behavioral strategies to mitigate further outbreak. Working with thousands of local women in India to eliminate Polio sparked her passion for understanding gender dynamics in public health. Before founding Common Thread, Sherine held senior behavior change positions with UNICEF at country and HQ locations, and is widely published in the realm of public health and social and behavior change.

Sherine has a MSc in Public Health from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and a MA in International Development and Economics from Johns Hopkins University. She is a guest lecturer at New York University’s (NYU’s) School of Global Public Health and sits on a number of Technical Advisory Groups, including for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and PATH. Sherine speaks Arabic, and is based in Bucharest, Romania with her husband and twin toddlers.

Charu Kaushic, Ph.D., is the Scientific Director of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)-Institute of Infection and Immunity, serving in this role since July 1, 2018. Dr. Kaushic is also a tenured Full Professor in the Department of Medicine in McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada. In her role as the Scientific Director for CIHR-III, Dr. Kaushic is responsible for making decisions for CIHR strategic investments in the area of infection and immunity, nationally and internationally. She also represents CIHR and Government of Canada at various national and international forums related to infectious diseases. In this capacity she serves as a Chair of GloPID-R, a global consortium of funders in pandemic preparedness and emergency response research. She also represents Canada on the JPIAMR Management Board. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she has been closely involved in shaping CIHR’s research response to the pandemic and is serving on Canada’s COVID-19 National Immunity Task Force.

Dr. Kaushic has a PhD in Immunology and did her post-doctoral training in mucosal immunology. Since her faculty appointment in McMaster in 2002, she has done extensive teaching and training in immunology and built an interdisciplinary research program in women’s reproductive health, specifically basic, clinical and translational research examining susceptibility and immune responses to sexually transmitted viruses, HIV-1 and HSV-2. Prior to joining CIHR, Dr. Kaushic’s research program was funded by CIHR, CFI, CANFAR and OHTN. She has received numerous
national and international awards including a Rockefeller post-doctoral fellowship, CIHR New Investigator Award, OHTN Research Scholar award, OHTN Research Chair award and the 2017 American Journal of Reproductive Immunology Research Excellence Award.

Heidi Larson, Ph.D., is an anthropologist and Director of The Vaccine Confidence Project™ (VCP); Professor of Anthropology, Risk and Decision Science, Dept. Infectious Disease Epidemiology, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine; Clinical Professor, Institute of Health Metrics & Evaluation, University of Washington, Seattle; Guest Professor at the University of Antwerp, Belgium and the National University of Singapore. Dr. Larson previously headed Global Immunization Communication at UNICEF, chaired Gavi’s Advocacy Task Force, and served on the WHO SAGE Working Group on vaccine hesitancy.

Professor Larson’s research focuses on the analysis of social and political factors that can affect uptake of health interventions. Her particular interest is on risk and rumour management from clinical trials to delivery – and building public trust.

She is author of STUCK: How Vaccine Rumors Start – and Why They Don’t Go Away (Oxford University Press, 2020)

Glen J. Nowak, Ph.D., MA, is a Professor of Advertising and Public Relations at the University of Georgia Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication and Director of the Grady College’s Center for Health and Risk Communication. He is actively involved in health communication research and training related to infectious and vaccine-preventable diseases, crisis and risk communication, and vaccine hesitancy and acceptance, including with influenza and COVID-19 vaccination. Prior to re-joining the University of Georgia faculty in January 2013, Dr. Nowak spent 14 years at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including six years as the Communications Director for the National Immunization Program and six years as the agency’s Director of Media Relations, including during the 2009 H1N1A pandemic. Dr. Nowak is an author or co-author of over 50 peer-reviewed journal articles and seven book chapters. Dr. Nowak received his Bachelor of Science degree in 1982 from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, with majors in economics and mass communications. He has an MA degree in journalism (1987) and a Ph.D. in the field of mass communications (1990) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Tolbert Nyenswah, LL.B., M.P.H., is a senior research associate with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Department of International Health. He is an internationally recognized legal scholar and a global public health expert. Prior to joining Johns Hopkins University, he was deputy minister of health of Liberia, chief executive officer (CEO) of the national public health institute, and assistant minister of health of the Republic of Liberia, during the administration of President Ellen Johns Sirleaf, appointed by the president and confirmed by
the senate three times. He specializes in high as well as low-and middle-income countries, health policies and systems and public health emergencies preparedness and response, advising on incident management system functionalities. He has been engaged with several public health emergencies, including, as incident manager of the 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic in West Africa, Lassa Fever, Zika, Meningitis and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic response. Since COVID-19, some of his major contributions to the COVID-19 response include the development of a COVID-19 contact tracing course that has over 15 million viewers, including 1.1 million enrolled and certified. He has been interviewed by multiple African, North American, Asian, European and South American media outlets, including the Washington Post, The HILL, Business Insider, Bloomberg, USA Today, NPR Radio, BBC, Business Insider, VOA News, World Economic Forum, The Philadelphia Inquirer, VOA Africa, The New Yorker, STAT, and POLITICO. He has attended and presented as an expert panelist on a couple of National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine seminars. He is also a member of the Global Health Index International panel of experts, which assesses the overall health security capacities of nations globally based on a multitude of health indicators. He has received numerous awards, notably the Bloomberg Hopkins Emerging Leader, Outstanding Recent Graduate from the Johns Hopkins University Alumni Association, TIME Magazine Persons of the Year for Ebola Fighters in West Africa, Medal of Excellence for Public Health Services, Medal from the Surgeon General of the United States. Highest Liberian civilian award for leading the Ebola crisis.

**Beverly Taylor, Ph.D.,** has more than 30 years experience in Biologics Industry at multiproduct facilities with over 21 years focusing on influenza vaccines. As Head of Influenza Scientific Affairs, WHO and IFPMA lead within the policy group at Seqirus, Beverly has responsibility for external interactions with influenza vaccine industry associations, NGO’s and Governments on behalf of Seqirus. She has held leadership roles in the industry association IFPMA Influenza Vaccine Supply (IVS) Taskforce for the last ten years, as Co-ordinator of the Scientific, Production and Regulatory (SPR) group for six years and Chair of the group since February 2018.

Beverly joined the Liverpool site in September 1999 as Head of Quality Control. Since then, she has also held leadership positions in Primary Manufacturing, Technology Development, Business Improvement, and Manufacturing Science and Technology.

Her previous experience was with Sanofi Pasteur in Canada where she held a number of posts including those of Research Scientist and Director of Quality Control.

**Sarah Zhang, B.Sc.,** is a staff writer at The Atlantic, where she covers health and science. She was previously a staff writer at WIRED, and her writing has also appeared in The New York Times, Nature, and other publications. She holds a degree in neurobiology from Harvard. She is the recipient of a AAAS Kavli Science Journalism award and a finalist for the Livingston Awards.