



June 2021

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## A Message from Our New President



Many of you may know me as the chief of the Kidney Transplant Program at ChristianaCare. Many of the employees at the hospital also know me as Andrew's dad. Andrew is my 32 year old son with severe autism who works in the pharmacy, in a job that uniquely fits the skills of a person with autism and not in a job fitted to a person with autism. His preparation for employment began 30 years ago in Maryland, and continued until age 21 here in the Delaware school system as he prepared for adult life. Like many other adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD), beyond age 21 Andrew's future is less certain. Many adults with IDD live with, and are supported by, obviously older parents. We remain

Andy's guardians and make important decisions on his behalf. A question my spouse and I ask everyday - What happens when we are gone? This is a question shared by so many others in Delaware, and beyond.

I hope we can all agree that the social determinants of health (such as satisfying employment, secure housing, personal safety, financial security, and a robust social life) make for a full and rich life. Add accessible and appropriate health care, and the picture is complete. As difficult as any of these issues are for us "normo-typical" people, they often seem insurmountable for the person with IDD and for their caregivers.

Influenced by my personal experience, and also by the experiences of the hundreds of persons with IDD and their families that we have met in Andrew's journey, I see a looming public health crisis. This has prompted me to propose a platform over the two years of my presidency to explore the public health issues of persons with IDD, and provide a venue for discussion, debate, and possibly, just possibly, some solutions to improve the lives of these wonderful people and their families. I ask you to join me. Thank you.

S. John Swanson, MD  
President

Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware Public Health Association  
2021-2023

*Dr. Swanson was the surgical director for the Kidney Transplant Program at ChristianaCare and Chief of Transplantation Surgery. He is a board-certified urologist who completed a residency in 1989 and kidney/pancreas fellowship training in 1991. From that time until his retirement in 2005, he had been the UNOS certified surgical director of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center Kidney/Pancreas Transplant Program. In 1994, he also became chief of the Organ Transplant Service, which he held until his retirement.*

COVID-19 has had our attention for the past 16 months, and as vaccination programs reach more individuals and “the numbers” improve, we cautiously turn our attention back to pressing concerns that existed before (and during) the pandemic: addiction, chronic disease, the health care workforce, public health infrastructure, and racism (to name just a few).

As Dr. S. John Swanson (above) takes the helm as our newly elected President of the Board Directors of the Academy/DPHA, we look forward to the focus he will bring to the issues of intellectual and developmental disability. We also look forward to the input and energy of the six new board members who join our existing [board of directors](#):



- **Jeff Cole, DDS** – General dentistry practice. Immediate Past President of the American Dental Association. Program Director, General Practice Dentistry Residency, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Hospital Dentistry, ChristianaCare
- **Lee Dresser, MD** – Adult Neurologist and a specialist in Sleep Medicine. Affiliated with St. Francis Hospital, Chair of the Delaware Stroke Initiative.
- **Erin Kavanaugh, MD** – Family Physician, Past President of the Delaware Academy of Family Physicians. Clinical Assistant Professor of Family and Community Medicine, Sidney Kimmel Medical College. Program Director, Family Medicine Residency Program, Co-Program Director, Emergency Medicine/Family Medicine Residency Program, ChristianaCare.
- **Joe Kelly, DDS** – General Dentistry Practice. immediate Past President of the Delaware State Dental Society. Private Practitioner.
- **Ann Painter, MSN, RN** – Senior Vice President, ChristianaCare Home Health and Community Services.
- **Charmaine Wright, MD, MSHP** – Medical Director of the Center for Special Health Care Needs at ChristianaCare, Medical Director of the Mary Campbell Center, and is on the Easterseals of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore Board of Directors

We are looking forward to the summer which will include our first Osher Lifelong Learning Institute summer session, several student internships, and planning for fall activities. Two issues of the Delaware Journal of Public Health are also “on deck” – so stay tuned for their release and details from Dr. Khan.

From all of us at the Academy/DPHA – have an enjoyable, safe summer!

*Tim Gibbs, MPH*  
*Executive Director*  
*Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware Public Health Association*  
[tgibbs@delamed.org](mailto:tgibbs@delamed.org)

## Annual Meeting Highlights

### President's Award

The Lewis B. Flinn President's Award is made in the name of Lewis B. Flinn, M.D., a founder and the first President of the Delaware Academy of Medicine. It is awarded to an individual or organization that has achieved distinction by substantive contributions to the well being of our community through education, leadership, philanthropy, or service.

This year, the award was given to Governor John Carney and First Lady Tracey Quillen



Carney

"We have great hospital systems, great organizations, like the Academy and Public Health Association, like all these people in this room." - Governor John Carney

"No single entity, no matter how well intentioned, can do essential work alone." First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney

[Learn More!](#)

## Public Health Recognition Award

Started by the Delaware Academy of Medicine in 2010, the Executive Director's Public Health Recognition Award is given to a Delaware nonprofit organization who has shown outstanding leadership and dedication to the improvement of our community.

This year's award was given to the [Delaware Rural Health Initiative](#).

*"[It is] very heartening to see people coming together and to create a consensus agenda of issues to work on the opioid crisis, the mental health crisis, and the response to the COVID crisis this past year, it really shows you how incredibly important partnerships are in addressing health issues."* - Dr. Karyl Rattay, accepting the award on behalf of the Delaware Rural Health Initiative



[Learn More!](#)

## National News

Did you know?

The Academy/DPHA is Delaware's Chapter of the American Public Health Association!



When you become a member of APHA, you get access to webinars like these:

AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
*For science. For action. For health.*

- The Intersection of Policy and Violence
- Climate Change and Health: The Long-Term Impacts of Recent Climate Crisis-Related Events in Texas and Louisiana
- Vaccine Misinformation: What Works and What Doesn't

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### June is...

Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month  
Aphasia Awareness Month  
Men's Health Month  
Pride Month

[And Much More!](#)

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## Additional Resources

Delaware Division of Public Health - [The DPH Bulletin](#)

## The Delaware Academy of Medicine / Delaware Public Health Association

### Academy of Medicine 2021 - 2023 Board of Directors

**President:** S. John Swanson, MD  
**Secretary:** Lynn Jones, FACHE  
**Treasurer:** David M. Bercaw, MD  
**Immediate Past President:** Omar A. Khan, MD, MHS  
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### DPHA Advisory Council

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