

Morning Breakout Session #1 (10:15am to 11:15am)**The Impact of Federal Medicaid Changes on MassHealth Members**

Presenter: Jarred Damico brings over 18 years of experience in human services and public administration, with leadership in MassHealth operations, Medicaid policy, disability services, and large-scale program management. In his current role as Deputy Chief Operating Officer for Special Projects and Business Operations, he oversees major statewide initiatives impacting millions of members, including eligibility redeterminations, program integrity, and operational systems for key Medicaid programs.

Recent federal Medicaid policy changes may have significant and immediate impacts on access to health coverage for MassHealth members. This session will review key provisions of recent federal legislation, including changes related to eligibility renewals, immigration-related requirements, work provisions, and exemptions. Participants will also learn about MassHealth's strategies for outreach and member education, with a focus on how these changes may affect older adults, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable populations. Participants will strengthen their ability to anticipate coverage disruptions, support consumers through eligibility processes, and respond effectively to evolving policy changes.

Problem Management Plus: A Mental Health Model Used by Non-Clinical Providers

Presenter: Annie Fowler is the Chief Clinical Integration Officer at Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services, where she leads behavioral health program development. She has played a key role in expanding in-home mental health supports for older adults, including implementation of the Problem Management Plus (PM+) program.

Problem Management Plus (PM+) is an evidence-informed, short-term intervention designed to help individuals experiencing distress related to complex life challenges. This session will introduce PM+ as a practical model that can be used by trained non-clinical staff to expand access to mental health supports within community-based settings. Participants will explore how to identify appropriate candidates for PM+, distinguish when referral to higher levels of care is needed, and consider key factors in implementing PM+ within their organizations. The session highlights how this approach can strengthen early intervention, reduce escalation of need, and improve access to support for older adults and other community members.

Understanding Nursing Facility Clinical Eligibility for Community Consumers

Presenters: Desiree Kelley is the Clinical Nurse Manager at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE), where she oversees Clinical Assessment and Eligibility (CAE) policies and provides nursing expertise across Care Continuum programs, including Home Care and the Community Transition Liaison Program. Melissa Enos is the Home Care and Program Analytics Nurse at AGE, where she develops and monitors CAE policies and supports statewide clinical initiatives such as fall prevention, drawing on prior experience in assisted living and hospital and facility nursing. Naomi Tang is the Director of Nursing and Community Health Programs at AgeSpan, where she oversees community-based nursing and long-term services and supports programs, with experience in care coordination, program development, and quality improvement supporting older adults in the community.

Understanding nursing facility clinical eligibility is essential for helping consumers access the community-based services that best meet their needs. This session will review the clinical criteria used to determine eligibility for nursing facility services under MassHealth and demonstrate how those criteria are applied to individuals living in the community. Participants will also gain a clearer understanding of eligibility requirements for the Enhanced Community Options Program (ECOP) and Frail Elder Waiver (FEW), strengthening their ability to assess needs, support informed care planning, and connect consumers with appropriate long-term services and supports.

TransGeneration: A Foundation for Working with Transgender and Gender Diverse Older Adults

Presenter: Lisa Krinsky is the Director of the LGBTQIA+ Aging Project at The Fenway Institute/Fenway Health, where she leads efforts to advance equity, inclusion, and culturally responsive services for LGBTQIA+ older adults. She is a nationally recognized leader in LGBTQIA+ aging, with expertise in training, program development, and policy advocacy focused on improving access, dignity, and support for diverse older adult communities.

Providing affirming, respectful services for transgender and gender diverse older adults is essential to ensuring equitable access to care and improving health outcomes. This foundational session introduces key terminology and concepts related to transgender aging, explores common challenges faced by transgender older adults, and identifies practical steps for creating more inclusive and welcoming service environments. Participants will strengthen their ability to engage in respectful, person-centered conversations about gender identity and identify opportunities to enhance inclusivity at both the practice and organizational levels.

Final schedule subject to change due to presenter availability

Registration link: **Mass Aging Access Fall Conference**

<https://agingaccess.org/fall-conference-2026/>



MAA 2026 Fall Conference Sessions

Morning Breakout Session #2 (11:30am to 12:30pm)

Beyond the Buzz: A Practical Path to AI for Organizations

Presenters: Chris Grasso is the Founder and CIO of FASTx Partners, LLC, with over 30 years of experience in healthcare and nonprofit technology leadership focused on digital transformation, data strategy, cybersecurity, and responsible AI adoption. Jim Santiago is the Chief Information Officer at AgeSpan, with extensive experience in nonprofit technology leadership, cybersecurity, and workforce innovation. Andrew Blanchette is Chief of Staff at Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services, with over 13 years of experience in healthcare operations and project management, specializing in aligning technology and operational strategy to improve organizational effectiveness and growth. Zach Boyer is Planning Director at Coastline Elderly Services, Inc., where he leads award-winning digital equity and technology initiatives, including consumer technology access programs, workforce development, and regional collaborations, with emerging expertise in AI integration, policy, and planning in aging services.

Artificial intelligence is rapidly changing the way organizations work—but where should you begin? This session moves beyond the hype to explore practical, real-world applications of AI that can help human services organizations streamline administrative tasks, improve workflows, and free up more time for serving consumers. Participants will also learn foundational steps for responsible AI adoption, including governance, risk management, and organizational readiness, with an emphasis on using AI ethically while protecting privacy, maintaining public trust, and supporting person-centered services.

Turning Tension into Traction: How to Help Challenging Clients

Presenters: Gail Leichtman is an Aging Life Care Manager with over 40 years of experience in aging services and care management, including long-standing leadership in professional care management associations. Erin Whalen is an Aging Life Care Manager with more than 25 years of experience specializing in Alzheimer's disease and dementia care, with prior work supporting programs through the Alzheimer's Association, Boston University Alzheimer's Disease Center, and assisted living settings.

Supporting older adults who are reluctant to accept help or resistant to change can be among the greatest challenges in community-based services. This session will explore the behaviors and underlying factors that can make engagement difficult while providing practical, person-centered strategies for building trust, strengthening relationships, and encouraging meaningful participation in services. Participants will gain tools to better connect with challenging consumers, navigate difficult interactions, and foster positive outcomes that support independence and well-being.

Harnessing the Power of Documentation: How to Create Timely, Accurate, and Person-Centered Records

Presenters: Lynn Vidler is Assistant Secretary for Care Continuum, Devon Garon is Director of Home and Community Programs, Taryn Lee-Turgeon is Assistant Director of Protective Services, Shannon Turner is Home Care Program Coordinator, and Desiree Kelley is Clinical Nurse Manager. All serve in leadership roles at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE) and bring extensive expertise in home care, protective services, clinical practice, and statewide aging services.

Good documentation is more than a regulatory requirement—it is a vital tool for supporting high-quality, person-centered services. This session will explore best practices for creating timely, accurate, and objective case notes that strengthen service delivery, promote continuity of care, and support consumer outcomes. Through practical examples and documentation exercises, participants will learn how to distinguish objective observations from assessments and opinions, improve the clarity and defensibility of their records, and ensure documentation meets program and agency standards.

MFP Demonstration: Program Overview, Integration, and Operationalization

Presenters: Lisa Felci Jimenez is Director of Clinical Services at Mystic Valley Elder Services, with more than 20 years of experience in community-based care for older adults and people with disabilities. Vanessa Medeiros is the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Demonstration Program Coordinator at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE), where she provides statewide program oversight, policy development, and training, drawing on more than 14 years of leadership experience in the ASAP network. Carissa Kushmerek is Deputy Director of Care Transitions at AGE, leading statewide policy, regulatory guidance, and training for care transition programs, with extensive experience in home care and MassHealth long-term services and supports.

This session will provide an overview of the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Demonstration and its role in supporting successful transitions from nursing facilities to the community. Participants will learn how Community Transition Liaison Program (CTLTP) teams use the MFP Demonstration to coordinate services, support person-centered transitions, and help individuals successfully return to community living. The session will also highlight how ASAPs can effectively leverage the program to enhance care integration and strengthen collaboration across community-based services.



MAA 2026 Fall Conference Sessions

Afternoon Breakout Session #1 (1:45pm to 2:45pm)

Personal Care Attendant Program 101 and Programmatic Changes

Presenters: Sherri Hannigan is Director of the Personal Care Attendant Program at MassHealth, where she oversees statewide program policy, implementation, and operations. She brings extensive experience in aging services, home care, and MassHealth programs, including leadership roles within the ASAP network. Danielle Ridge is Deputy Director of the Personal Care Attendant Program at MassHealth, overseeing program operations and implementation, with prior experience managing Adult Day Health and Day Habilitation programs within the Office of Long-Term Services and Supports (OLTSS).

This session provides an overview of the Massachusetts Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Program, including eligibility requirements, the self-directed service model, and recent policy and operational changes. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of how the program works, the roles of key stakeholders, and how evolving regulations affect consumers, personal care attendants, and service providers, strengthening their ability to support informed referrals, care coordination, and consumer advocacy.

Seen, Supported, Safe: Recognizing and Responding to Depression and Suicidal Ideation

Presenter: Dr. Ana Trueba Yopez is an Assistant in Psychology in the Division of Geriatric Psychiatry at McLean Hospital and an Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. She specializes in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and the integration of mindfulness into treatment for older adults, with expertise in evidence-based approaches to depression, suicide prevention, and behavioral health.

Depression and suicide risk in older adults often go unrecognized because symptoms may present differently than in younger populations or be mistaken for the normal effects of aging. This session will help participants identify the unique signs of depression and suicidal ideation in older adults, conduct evidence-based suicide risk assessments and safety planning, and apply practical intervention strategies drawn from Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). Participants will also examine the impact of ageism, stigma, and gaps in behavioral health access, and learn approaches to strengthen collaboration and referral pathways that support timely, person-centered mental health care for older adults.

Bridging the Gap: Effective ASAP-to-ASAP Consumer Transfers

Presenters: Devon Garon is Director of Home and Community Programs; Carissa Kushmerek is Deputy Director of Care Transitions; Shannon Turner is Home Care Program Coordinator; Brian Glennon is Home Care Waiver/Program Manager; Taryn Lee-Turgeon is Assistant Director of Protective Services. Together, they serve in leadership roles at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE) and bring extensive expertise in home care, care transitions, waiver programs, protective services, policy development, regulatory guidance, and statewide aging services. When consumers move across service areas or receive services from multiple Aging Services Access Points, effective coordination is essential to maintaining continuity of care. This session will explore best practices for managing ASAP-to-ASAP consumer transfers, promoting seamless communication, and coordinating services across programs such as Home Care, Protective Services, and Community Transitions. Participants will gain practical strategies to support person-centered care, reducing risk, and ensuring consumers experience smooth, coordinated transitions throughout the ASAP network.

Supporting a Culture of Quality Improvement: The Respect for People Roadmap

Presenters: Dawn Hobill is the Director of Quality at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE), where she oversees agency performance metrics and quality initiatives, with prior experience in care transitions, quality improvement, and aging services across provider and regulatory settings. She is a certified PMP, Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, and Agile Scrum Master. Kelly Ensor is Associate Director of Quality Assurance at Highland Valley Elder Services, with a background in case management, supervision, and organizational quality improvement within the ASAP network, as well as prior experience supporting individuals with disabilities and aging services program delivery.

A strong organizational culture is built on trust, respect, and a shared commitment to continuous improvement. This interactive session introduces the Respect for People Roadmap, a practical framework for creating healthy, high-performing teams through effective communication, constructive feedback, and meaningful collaboration. Participants will explore strategies for fostering psychological safety, navigating workplace conflict, reducing bias, and strengthening team relationships while building a culture that supports quality improvement, employee engagement, and person-centered service delivery.



MAA 2026 Fall Conference Sessions

Afternoon Breakout Session #2 (3:00pm to 4:00pm)

Care Without Walls: Understanding Massachusetts' Hospital at Home and Mobile Integrated Health Programs

Presenters: Adam Delmolino is Senior Director of Virtual Care & Clinical Affairs at the Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association, where he leads initiatives in digital health, telemedicine, care transitions, and healthcare policy. Michael Kalfopoulos, MD, is Associate Medical Director of Hospital at Home at UMass Memorial Health, where he leads innovative home-based acute care programs with a focus on technology, AI, and program development to improve patient outcomes and expand Hospital at Home services.

This session explores the growing role of Hospital at Home (HaH) and Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) programs in delivering acute care beyond traditional hospital settings. Participants will learn about program structure, eligibility, and policy, while examining how these models improve care coordination, support medically complex patients, and address health equity. The session also highlights opportunities for social workers to strengthen care transitions, caregiver engagement, and interdisciplinary collaboration in home-based care.

Compassion Fatigue: The Hidden Cost of Caring—and How to Reclaim It

Presenter: Kristin Gauthier is a Public Health Nurse and Integrative Health Practitioner with over 25 years of experience in elder care, hospital, and community health settings. She specializes in stress resilience, burnout prevention, and nervous system regulation, and provides workplace wellness programming focused on compassion fatigue and sustaining caregiver well-being.

Compassion fatigue is one of the most prevalent yet under-addressed challenges facing professionals in aging care. In this engaging, evidence-informed session, participants will explore the signs and stages of compassion fatigue, understand its connection to nervous system dysregulation, and walk away with practical tools and strategies to support stress reduction, resilience, and sustained engagement in their caregiving roles. Whether participants are just beginning to notice the signs or are deeply in need of a reset, this session offers practical strategies to restore resilience and sustain well-being.

Driving Staff Efficiency Through Technology

Presenters: Lynn Vidler is Assistant Secretary for Care Continuum, Devon Garon is Director of Home and Community Programs, and Vanessa Medeiros is Money Follows the Person (MFP) Demonstration Program Coordinator at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE). Julie Arena is Clinical Nurse Director, Jason Dwyer is Director of Information Technology, and Christine Johnson is Director of State Home Care at Aging Services of North Central Massachusetts (ASNCM). Scott Szymczak is Information & Technology Director and Sharon Thompson is Chief Programs Officer at Tri-Valley, Inc. Together, these presenters bring extensive leadership experience and expertise in statewide aging services policy, home care, clinical operations, care transitions, technology, and organizational innovation.

Technology can help reduce administrative burden, improve workflows, and give staff more time to focus on serving consumers. In this session, two Aging Services Access Points will share how they have successfully implemented technology solutions to streamline day-to-day operations and increase staff efficiency. Participants will explore practical examples of tools that support documentation, communication, and workflow management, while learning strategies for fostering staff engagement and encouraging successful technology adoption across their organizations.

Caregivers as Economic Citizens: A Replicable Grant Model

Presenters: Stacie Amedio Alpert is Assistant Director of Caregiver Solutions and Home Care Analytics at Boston Senior Home Care, with over 15 years of experience in aging services and expertise in caregiver supports, home care case management, and senior housing coordination. Holly Jarrell-Marcinelli is Senior Director of Consumer Services at Greater Lynn Senior Services, with more than 25 years of experience overseeing ASAP and AAA programs and leading initiatives in behavioral health, caregiver support, and care coordination. Molly Evans is Senior Manager of Strategic Programs and Innovation at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE), where she focuses on family caregiving, digital equity, and aging services policy and program development.

This session explores family caregiving as a driver of economic security, workforce participation, and health outcomes, with a focus on Massachusetts-based innovation through the AGE Caregiver Innovation Grant. Participants will examine replicable caregiver support models developed by AAAs/ASAPs, including key partnerships, implementation approaches, and early lessons learned, and will apply a practical framework for designing caregiver-focused pilot programs. The session emphasizes both clinical and macro practice skills, including identifying and supporting caregivers in distress and building cross-sector initiatives that improve caregiver well-being and system-level outcomes.