

The CP State Medical Directors' Council is pleased to present...

8th Annual Conference on
**Multi-Disciplinary Clinical Care for
Patients with Intellectual and
Developmental Disabilities**



REGISTRATION BROCHURE

ELEVATE YOUR IMPACT

This premier two-day event is the definitive gathering for clinical leaders and healthcare practitioners within New York's intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) provider community. It serves as a vital platform to engage with multi-disciplinary experts, gain actionable clinical insights, and explore innovative care models for the field's most pressing challenges—from the integration of medical and behavioral health to advancements in oral healthcare and administrative excellence.

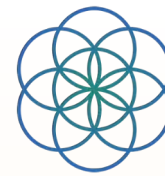
By fostering a collaborative environment, we empower our attendees to Elevate Their Impact, ensuring that patients with I/DD receive the comprehensive, high-quality care they deserve.

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW:

Date: May 14-15, 2026

Location: Embassy Suites, 86 Congress St, Saratoga Springs, NY

WELCOME



80th
Anniversary
CP State
Driving the Disability Movement Since 1946

Welcome to the 8th Annual CP State Medical Director's Clinical Conference! Join us for a 2-day event in which you'll hear from experts of different clinical disciplines and leadership at state and national levels.

This in-person conference is filled with insightful multi-disciplinary sessions and discussions focused on how to provide care and advocate for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD).

Session topics will incorporate medical, mental/behavioral, and oral healthcare. Whether you're a physician, dentist, nurse, clinician, therapist, student, or administrator, this conference is your opportunity to learn, network with New York's leading experts, and bring innovative solutions back to your practice. Don't miss out on this valuable event!

Sincerely,
Your Co-Chairs,
Dr. Maria Kansas, MD
Dr. Vincent Siasoco, MD, MBA

ABOUT CP STATE

CP State (Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York State) is a multi-service organization representing over 30 Affiliates and 18,000+ employees across New York. For 80 years, we have provided statewide leadership and advocacy for programs supporting more than 100,000 individuals with cerebral palsy and other developmental disabilities.

CP State is at the forefront of clinical excellence, spearheading initiatives that ensure healthcare equity and improve long-term outcomes for the I/DD community. Our conferences serve as the vital link between clinical innovation and the dedicated professionals who provide life-changing care.

CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mike Alvaro, CP State
Cheryl Bradway, CP State
Jessica Cornell, HCA
Laura DeCarlo, ADAPT Community Network
Martha Farewell, Aspire of WNY
Tim Ferguson, CP State
Michele Griguts, NYS Department of Health
Eric Jacobson, Ph.D., Upstate CP

Maria Kansas, MD
Kelsey Massyk, CP State
Kate Powers, DO, Albany Medical Center
Kim Seltzer, Jawonio
Vincent Siasoco, MD, ADAPT Community Network
Mitch Spiegel, Jawonio
Susan Waters, Center for Disability Services
Deb Williams, CP State

GENERAL INFO



Thursday, 5/14/26 -
Friday, 5/15/26



Embassy Suites
86 Congress Street
Saratoga Springs, NY



Registration



Deadline to Register:
Friday, 5/8/26

Physicians, Clinicians, Dentists, & Others \$300.00

Medical/Dental Students & Residents \$200.00

Nurses, Hygienists, DSP, PTA, OTA \$200.00

REGISTER HERE >

CP State Affiliates can
use promo code

CPAFFILIATE-26

to get \$50 off registration!

Not sure if you are an
Affiliate? [Click here!](#)

Notice to Registrants:

Use of the Affiliate discount code is subject to employment verification. If status cannot be confirmed, you will be billed for the \$50 price difference. This invoice must be paid online before the conference. Please be advised that any outstanding balances must be settled at the check-in desk to ensure admission.

GENERAL INFO



Refund & Cancellation Policy

You may request a refund for your order, less the ticketing & processing fees, until Thursday, April 23.

After April 23 no refunds or cancellations will be processed, but you may send a replacement attendee. Please contact the CP State office at 518-436-0178 to make attendee information changes.



Presentations & Handouts

Presentations & handouts will be posted prior to the conference on the [CP State website](#).



Continuing Education Credits

Continuing Education Credits will be available for this conference. Stay tuned for more information.



Questions?

Email us at info@cpstate.org or call the CP State office at (518) 436-0178

HOTEL INFO



EMBASSY SUITES®

Saratoga Springs

86 Congress Street,
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
(518) 290-9090

Room Rate: **\$174.00** (+ applicable taxes)
Don't forget a tax exempt form if applicable

Book Before: **April 14, 2026**
After that time, reservations will be accepted subject to availability at the prevailing rate

BOOK NOW



Click Below to View Local Restaurants

RESTAURANTS



Welcome & Opening Remarks

12:45 - 1:00pm

Mike Alvaro, *President & CEO, CP State*

Vincent Siasoco, MD, MBA, *Medical Director, ADAPT Community Network*

Welcome to the 8th Annual Conference on Multi-Disciplinary Clinical Care for Patients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD).

Session #1, Day 1 Keynote

Better Care, Better Lives: Medicaid's Evolving Impact on Services for Individuals with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

1:05 - 1:50pm

Trisha Schell-Guy, JD, *Director, Division of Program Development & Management, Office of Health Insurance Programs, NYS Department of Health*

A discussion about what Medicaid Policy Experts have been doing and how they can work with providers, families, and Medicaid members to continue to improve and shape the care and services provided to individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

Session #2

Is it Aging, Sensory Loss, or Dementia? Practical Clinical Guidance for Adults with I/DD

2:00 - 3:15pm

Kathie Bishop, PhD, Gerontologist & Consultant

Seth Keller, MD, Neurologist, Neurology Associates of South Jersey

Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are living longer than ever, bringing new challenges related to sensory aging, functional decline, and increased risk for dementia. This presentation—jointly delivered by Seth M. Keller, MD, and Kathie Bishop, PhD—integrates sensory, environmental, neurological, and dementia-capable care perspectives into a comprehensive model that supports accurate assessment, compassionate care, and effective systems of support for adults aging with I/DD. Attendees will learn practical approaches to distinguishing sensory changes from cognitive decline, optimizing environments, improving diagnostic accuracy, and building integrated care pathways that promote quality of life throughout the aging process.

BREAK

3:15 - 3:35pm

Post-Break Discussion on Golisano Center

3:35 - 3:50pm

Holly Brown, DNP, RN, Executive Director, Golisano Institute for Developmental Disability Nursing, St. John Fisher University

Session #3

Clinical Crossroads: Psychiatry, Residential Care, and Behavior Analysis in a Complex Autism Case

3:50 - 4:50pm

Erik Jacobson, PhD, Chief Clinical Officer, Upstate Caring Partners

Holly Brown, DNP, RN, Executive Director, Golisano Institute for Developmental Disability Nursing, St. John Fisher University

This presentation reviews a complex residential case of a 21-year-old man with intellectual disability and autism whose persistent interest in ominous or macabre themes, alongside negative affect or low mood, was at times understood as indicative of more serious psychiatric conditions, especially in the absence of careful consideration of developmental disability-related influences. Over time, the case was viewed through three different clinical lenses, each shaping risk assessment, medication decisions, behavior analytic intervention, and the team's ability to build trust and support movement toward a state of being happy, relaxed, and engaged (HRE). We examine how diagnostic framing influenced treatment trajectory—including the impact of diagnostic overshadowing and polypharmacy—and how shifting the clinical lens ultimately expanded pathways to more effective, humane, and person-centered care.

Session #4

Clinical Pearls In I/DD Healthcare with a Focus on GI Issues

5:00 - 6:00pm

Craig Escude, MD, President, IntellectAbility

Clinical Pearls are bits of clinically helpful information that are usually gained from experiences or observations. They are easily digestible, immediately usable and are not always found in a book. This presentation will focus on a number of clinical pearls learned "the hard way" so that you don't have to. Both the new and seasoned supporters will find tips and observations in this discussion that will be of help in their support and care for people with I/DD. The talk will include discussions on a number of GI topics and will provide information useful for Inservice training for support staff, for family members, and for clinicians about important topics that can improve the level of healthcare that they deliver to people with I/DD.

DINNER ON YOUR OWN

6:00pm+

[Click here](#) to view a list of local restaurants.

REFLECT, RELAX, & REFILL!

Before you head out for the evening, join us for a post-session reception from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM in the bar area.

It's the perfect time to network, relax, and swap insights with your peers. Enjoy light appetizers and two drink tickets on us as we celebrate a successful first day!

Don't forget to bring the complimentary drink ticket that you received upon check-in!

If you are not staying overnight at the Embassy Suites, stop by the registration table before the end of Day 1 to get one.



SCHEDULE

DAY 2
Wednesday, May 15

BREAKFAST

7:00 - 8:15am

Available in the main dining room for all conference participants.

Welcome

8:15 - 8:30am

Session #5, Day 2 Keynote

The Empire State of Health for People with I/DD

8:30 - 9:15am

Jill Pettinger, Psy.D., Deputy Commissioner of Statewide Services,
OPWDD

Deputy Commissioner Pettinger will discuss the current and future state of services for people with developmental disabilities in NYS along with the healthcare challenges faced by this special population. The session will incorporate the healthcare state of the nation and how that will impact NYS healthcare for people with I/DD.

Session #6

Disability Health Advocacy Now!

9:25 - 10:40am

Mike Alvaro, President & CEO, CP State

Rick Rader, MD, Director of the Habilitation Center, Orange Grove
Center

Evan Sullivan, Executive Vice President, Ostroff Associates

The need for disability health access has always been of highest priority in the disability movement, but with federal budget cuts to Medicaid and the traditional failure of policy makers to fully understand the system efficiencies generated by investment in disability health our messaging needs to be clearer than ever. In this session you will hear the latest on disability health advocacy priorities against the New York State and federal landscape.

SCHEDULE

DAY 2
Wednesday, May 15

BREAK

10:40 - 11:00am

Session #7

Behaviors Happen... Now What? A Dynamic Approach to Supporting Individuals with Disabilities

11:00am - 12:00pm

Rita Bilello, DDS, Director, NYU College of Dentistry Oral Health Center for People with Disabilities

Serena Simone, DDS, MPH, Pediatric Dentist & Clinical Assistant Professor, NYU College of Dentistry

This session will describe how NYU approaches dental care in the NYU Oral Health Center for People with Disabilities using sensory and behavioral techniques to both help the patient accommodate to the challenges of the dental environment but also build the skills that they need to be able to actively participate in their own care. The presenters will then describe how to expand what they do for dental services to other services and disciplines to demonstrate how attendees can take some of these techniques back to their own practices to assist in care delivery.

LUNCH

12:00 - 1:00pm

Session #8

Advocacy for Palliative & End of Life Care

1:00 - 2:15pm

Marc Antonucci, General Counsel, Center for Disability Services

George Giokas, MD, Palliative Medicine Consultant, Ellis Medicine

Karen McDonald, LMSW, CCM, St. Peters Palliative Care Partners

During this session, legal, medical, and social work professionals will discuss the complexities of advance directives and advance care planning for individuals with I/DD.

Session #9

Few Maps For These Roads: An Overview of Psychopharmacology in I/DD

2:25 - 3:40pm

Ben Margolis, MD, Psychiatrist, Bronx Psychiatric Center & Senior Psychiatrist and Staff Neurologist, Access: Supports for Living

Practicing Evidence-Based Medicine in providing care to individuals with I/DD is complex - historically people with I/DD have been excluded from clinical trials and the literature offers less guidance than exists for the general population. Many providers end up utilizing psychiatric medications off-label by necessity, as there are only two antipsychotic medications currently FDA approved for autism-related aggressions and the behavioral health challenges associated with autism and ID don't always neatly fit into DSM diagnoses.

This talk will provide clinicians and non-clinicians with a general overview of the major categories of psychiatric medications and how they are used on and off-label by behavioral health providers in treating individuals living with I/DD. We will also cover common scenarios in which polypharmacy emerges, and strategies for minimizing medication needs. We will also cover some of the pharmacogenomic tests that are currently available and scenarios in which they can be clinically useful.

Attendees will gain knowledge of how medication can be a part of supporting mental health and independence when used responsibly and judiciously by behavioral healthcare providers.

WRAP-UP & EVALUATIONS

3:50 - 4:00pm

SPEAKERS

DAY 1 KEYNOTE



Trisha Schell-Guy, JD

Director, Division of Program Development & Management, Office of Health Insurance Programs, NYS Department of Health

Trisha Schell-Guy is a mother, a wife, an animal lover, a daughter, and a committed advocate for human rights especially those of the LGBTQ community. She is an attorney and the Director of the Division of Program Development and Management in the NYS Department of Health, Office of Health Insurance Programs. In this capacity she advises and assists the Deputy Commissioner and Medicaid Director in the development and implementation of policies for the NY Medicaid program and oversees the evaluation and effectiveness of the program.

DAY 2 KEYNOTE

Jill Pettinger, PsyD

Deputy Commissioner of Statewide Services, Office for People with Developmental Disabilities



Dr. Jill Pettinger is OPWDD's Deputy Commissioner of Statewide Services, providing leadership and oversight to a division comprising nine bureaus including Health Services, Behavioral Services, and the Institute for Basic Research. She and her staff oversee critical initiatives that help individuals with developmental disabilities lead richer lives. Previously, Dr. Pettinger served in several executive roles within OPWDD, including Deputy Commissioner of State Operations and Chief Psychologist. Her extensive background includes work as a licensed psychologist for the Capital District DDSO, the Center for the Disabled, and Schoharie County ARC. She has also served as an Adjunct Professor at several regional colleges. Dr. Pettinger holds a Psy.D. and M.S. from the University at Albany.

SPEAKERS



Mike Alvaro

President & CEO, CP State

Mike Alvaro is the President and CEO of CP State, where he leads advocacy and education for nearly 30 independent Affiliates supporting people with I/DD across New York. Since stepping into the role of CEO in 2021, he has worked with leaders to identify priority issues, notably implementing a \$16M statewide telehealth project supporting 9,000 individuals and transforming residential support. Mr. Alvaro also serves as President of New York Disability Advocates (NYDA). With over 30 years in health advocacy, his career includes leadership roles at HANYS and the Iroquois Healthcare Alliance, where he helped establish one of the state's first health information exchanges. He has secured over \$20M in grants to advance disability services and holds an MPA in health policy management from SUNY's Rockefeller College.

Marc Antonucci

General Counsel, Center for Disability Services



Since 2018, Marc Antonucci has served as General Counsel for the Center for Disability Services, one of upstate New York's largest providers of services for individuals with disabilities. Prior to that, he was a partner in the law firm Iseman, Cunningham, Riester & Hyde, LLP (now Rivkin Radler LLP), where his practice areas included healthcare, litigation, and business and commercial transactions. Mr. Antonucci currently serves on the board of several non-profit organizations, including LIFEPlan CCO NY.

SPEAKERS



Rita Bilello, DDS

Director, NYU College of Dentistry Oral Health Center for People with Disabilities

Dr. Rita Bilello, DDS is a general dentist and currently the Director of the New York University College of Dentistry Oral Health Center for People with Disabilities. She is also the Co-Chair of the OPWDD Taskforce on Special Dentistry since 2019. She has previously worked as both Dental Director and CEO of a disability focused FQHC and has extensive knowledge in both dentistry, disability healthcare and administration. Her work is driven around ensuring that her patients are able to access and receive healthcare that is not only of the highest quality but also delivered with dignity, respect and accessibility. Educating and advocating for disability competent healthcare, provider education and sustainable reimbursement has become her passion. Outside of work, you will find her indulging in her other passion, baking sweet treats!

Kathleen Bishop, Ph.D.

Gerontologist & Consultant



Kathleen M. Bishop, Ph.D., has 50+ years of experience in the I/DD field and 30+ as a Gerontologist specializing in aging with I/DD. A "failure at retirement" from the University of Rochester and NYS OPWDD, she now consults as Thru Rose-Colored Glasses. As chair of the NTG Education and Training committee, she co-developed the 2-day Dementia Capable Care curriculum and serves as a Lead Trainer, having instructed thousands of experts. Her expertise includes environmental design for older adults with I/DD and dementia. Dr. Bishop is a Special Editor for Helen: The Journal of Exceptionality. In her personal life, writing as Mary Kathleen McKenna, she is the author of the Women with Wisdom and Pets of Wisdom series, available on Amazon and Etsy.

SPEAKERS



Holly Brown, DNP, RN, PMHNP-BC, PMHCS

Executive Director, Golisano Institute for Developmental Disability Nursing, St. John Fisher University

Dr. Holly Brown is a nationally recognized psychiatric nurse practitioner and Executive Director of the Golisano Institute for Developmental Disability Nursing. She leads initiatives to integrate I/DD-focused education into nursing curricula to prepare advocates for underserved populations. As an Associate Professor, she is the Principal Investigator on a Special Olympics International grant developing a first-of-its-kind Nurse Practitioner Residency curriculum. In 2024, she became a Co-Investigator on an NIH grant addressing diagnostic overshadowing and ableism in healthcare. Dr. Brown maintains an active clinical practice as Senior Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner at Hillside Children's Center in Rochester, providing care to youth with dual I/DD and mental health diagnoses.

Craig Escudé, MD, FAFAP, FAADM, FAAIDD

President, IntellectAbility



Dr. Craig Escudé is a board-certified Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and is the President of IntellectAbility. He has more than 20 years of clinical experience providing medical care for people with I/DD and complex medical and mental health conditions. He is the author of *Clinical Pearls in I/DD Healthcare* and developer of the *Curriculum in I/DD Healthcare*, an eLearning course used to train clinicians on the fundamentals of healthcare for people with I/DD.

SPEAKERS



George Giokas, MD

Palliative Medicine Consultant , Ellis Medicine

George J. Giokas, M.D. is a physician specializing in the care of patients with serious illness. He sees patients at Ellis Hospital and is a member of the Ellis Medicine Ethics Committee. He practiced primary care internal medicine for 25 years before focusing on palliative medicine. Dr Giokas developed the palliative care program of Community Hospice, St Peters Health Partners, and Ellis Medicine. In addition to his clinical responsibilities, he remains active in the education of clinicians and the community on palliative medicine and end of life care. He is board certified in internal medicine and hospice and palliative medicine with additional training in geriatric medicine. He received his undergraduate degree from Tufts University, medical degree from George Washington University, and completed internal medicine residency at Albany Medical Center.

Erik Jacobson, Ph.D.

Chief Clinical Officer, Upstate Caring Partners



Dr. Erik Jacobson (Dr. J) is the Chief Clinical Officer at Upstate Caring Partners, where he provides strategic leadership for a clinical department of more than 90 professionals. A licensed psychologist and certified school psychologist, he brings over 25 years of experience supporting individuals with complex I/DD and psychiatric disabilities. Dr. Jacobson has led a system-wide transformation focused on strengthening clinical governance, expanding applied research, and modernizing data infrastructure. His leadership has improved coordination and reliability across programs. He also founded the Summer Externship in Complex Developmental Disabilities, creating a pipeline for future clinicians, and plays a central role in shaping the nationally recognized Compassionate Care Conference.

SPEAKERS



Seth Keller, MD

Neurologist , Neurology Associates of South Jersey

Seth M. Keller, MD, is a board-certified neurologist with Neurology Associates of South Jersey, specializing in adults with I/DD and neurologic complications. He is the co-president of the National Task Group on Intellectual Disabilities and Dementia Practices (NTG) and Past President of the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry (AADMD). Dr. Keller founded the Adult I/DD Section of the American Academy of Neurology and serves on the boards of The Arc of New Jersey and The Arc of Burlington County. An active international speaker and author on aging and dementia in I/DD, he earned his medical degree from George Washington University and completed his residency at Bethesda Naval Hospital, later serving as a neurologist for the U.S. Navy in Okinawa, Japan.

Benjamin Margolis, MD

*Psychiatrist, Bronx Psychiatric Center & Senior Psychiatrist
and Staff Neurologist, Access: Supports for Living*



Benjamin Margolis, MD, is board-certified in neurology and psychiatry, having completed the combined residency program at Brown University. He specializes in the neuropsychiatric care for adults with I/DD in the New York Hudson Valley. He attended medical school at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine after the postbaccalaureate premedical program at Columbia University and holds a BFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. He serves as a board member of the American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry, as treasurer, and on the Special Olympics NY Advisory Committee for their Strong Minds Program.

SPEAKERS

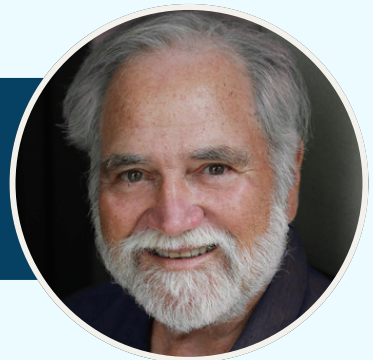


Karen McDonald, LMSW, CCM
St. Peters Palliative Care Partners

Karen McDonald, LMSW, CCM is a graduate of the State University of NY at Albany and licensed as a social worker and certified case manager. She currently serves as a Palliative care Social Worker with St Peter's Palliative Care Partners. Over the course of her 23 year career she has worked across a variety of settings supporting vulnerable populations including people living with a chronic illness, older adults, and individuals with intellectual disabilities and/or mental illness.

Rick Rader, MD

Director of the Habilitation Center, Orange Grove Center



Dr. Rick Rader is board-certified in developmental medicine and has served for 30 years as the Director of the Morton J. Kent Habilitation Center at the Orange Grove Center. He is responsible for creating innovative health delivery systems for individuals with I/DD and pioneered the use of individuals with I/DD as "standardized patients" in medical education. Dr. Rader has held two Presidential appointments (PCPID and NCD) and has advised four U.S. Surgeon Generals. He is a co-founder of the AADMD and past president of the AAHD. Currently, he is the Editor-in-Chief of HELEN: The Journal of Human Exceptionality and serves on the board of the NTG. A prolific author of over 300 articles, he was the first physician to address the United Nations on disability competency reform.

SPEAKERS



Vincent Siasoco, MD, MBA

Medical Director, ADAPT Community Network

Vincent Siasoco, MD, MBA, is a Board-certified Family Medicine Physician and Co-Chair of the CP State Medical Director's Council and Clinical Conference. He serves as Medical Director at ADAPT Community Network and is the Director of Primary Care at the Rose F. Kennedy CERC at Montefiore Medical Center, where he is also an Assistant Professor at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Dr. Siasoco co-chairs the NYS OPWDD Medical Advisory Taskforce and serves on the boards of the AADMD and Mercy Home. A dedicated advocate for inclusive health, he is a Special Olympics Clinical Director, Chair of the Special Olympics NY Health Advisory Council, and a member of the Special Olympics International Medical Advisory Committee.

Serena Simone, DDS, MPH

Pediatric Dentist & Clinical Assistant Professor, NYU College of Dentistry



Dr. Serena Simone, DDS, MPH is a board-certified pediatric dentist and Clinical Assistant Professor at NYU College of Dentistry with advanced training in Special Care Needs Dentistry, Autism, Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, and Public Health. She completed fellowships in Special Care Dentistry and the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) program at Montefiore Medical Center. Her clinical and academic work focuses on improving oral health outcomes for individuals of all ages with intellectual and developmental disabilities through the integration of behavioral psychology, sensory-informed care, and interdisciplinary collaboration to support dental providers, support members, and caregivers in caring for patients with neurodevelopmental, behavioral, and sensory differences.

SPEAKERS



Evan Sullivan

Executive Vice President, Ostroff Associates

Evan Sullivan joined Ostroff Associates with over a decade of experience in New York State Government, specializing in public policy and legislative negotiations. He previously served as Director of Legislation and Senior Advisor to the Independent Democratic Conference in the State Senate Majority Coalition, where he was instrumental in budget negotiations involving health, mental hygiene, and education. Evan also served as Committee Director for the Senate Committees on Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities. Recognized as a "Rising Star" and one of the "Upstate Power 100," he received the 2025 Autism Advocacy Award from Mental Health News Education. Evan holds dual degrees in Political Science and Economics from Siena College.




PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We are looking for innovative partners to help us define the future of I/DD healthcare. If your organization provides medical tools, behavioral health services, or administrative solutions, we want you at the table.

New Partners: We are actively expanding our network of vendors! To learn how you can connect with our audience of clinical decision-makers, please contact Tim Ferguson at tferguson@cpstate.org or 518-436-0178.

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