

*MMDA's official newsletter serving members in Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, D.C.*

## Damien Doyle to be Awarded MMDA's Prestigious Berman Award on March 11

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It is with great pride and enthusiasm that MMDA invites you to join us in celebrating

**Dr. Damien Doyle**, Immediate Past President of MMDA – The Mid-Atlantic Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine (MMDA), a long-standing leader in post-acute and long-term care medicine.

Dr. Doyle's distinguished career includes 23 years of dedicated service with the Hebrew Home of Greater Washington and Charles E. Smith Life Communities, where he served as Medical Director and Staff Physician. His unwavering commitment to excellence, mentorship, and compassionate care has left a lasting impact on our profession and the communities we serve.

From 12-1 p.m. on **Wednesday, March 11, 2026**, Dr. Doyle will be presented with **MMDA's prestigious 2026 Berman Award**, recognizing his outstanding dedication and lifelong contributions to post-acute and long-term care.

We warmly invite you to join us virtually as we honor Dr. Doyle's remarkable accomplishments:

**Virtual Event Zoom Link:** <https://zoom.us/j/7178173468?pwd=ZVJ6aVlOVkE3Wm53bDF6RjRFOEVxZz09&omn=94292326462>

#### Share Your Congratulations

We encourage you to participate in a special tribute by recording a brief congratulatory message. Please use the link below to submit your personal video or audio message (limited to one minute).

#### Recording Link:

<https://app.memento.com/honoring-damien-doyle/qOXwg2mgNE/record>



**Submission Deadline:** End of the day on Wednesday, March 11, 2026.

Your memories, reflections, and words of appreciation will help us create a meaningful tribute to a treasured colleague and friend within the MMDA

and PALTmed families.

#### About the Berman Award

The Berman Award is named in honor of **Dr. Joseph Berman**, the inaugural recipient and the third Medical Director of the Maryland Office of Health Care Quality. The award recognizes lifetime achievement in long-term care and honors leaders who exemplify dedication, integrity, and a steadfast commitment to best practices. Dr. Berman was instrumental in advancing educational requirements for medical directors across Maryland and in promoting the highest standards of care.

Recipients of this distinguished award are exemplary leaders in PALTC who have devoted their careers to strengthening and advancing the long-term care continuum.

**Please share this invitation with colleagues and friends who may wish to celebrate Dr. Doyle's well-deserved recognition.**

We look forward to honoring him together.

With warm regards,

Fatima Naqvi, MD, CMD  
President; MMDA

Elisa Gil-Pires, MD, FACP, CMD, CPE  
Vice President, MMDA

For questions, contact Ian Cordes, Administrator, at [ian.cordes@gmail.com](mailto:ian.cordes@gmail.com) or (561) 689-6321.

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# Message from the President



As we wade through 2026, I share with all of you with optimism that coming years will bring meaningful changes designed to provide specialized person-centered care for older adults at their residential areas. Maya Angelou said, “You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated.”

Last year’s Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medical Association (PALTmed) held PALTmed Advocacy Summit was one of the positive examples of efforts from our national and local chapter (MMDA). We continue to develop relationships with the new government administration and members of congress. Continuing the use of telehealth services for timely access to care, reduced isolation and time efficient services are one of our success stories.

Geriatric medicine has many subset



Dr. Fatima Naqvi

specialties. House calls, outpatient primary care geriatric, inpatient geriatrics, and Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine. Each entity is unique with its own characteristics. Standardizing a subspecialty yields services with excellence in performance and highest patient satisfaction.

PALTmed enrolled in the medical director certification process few decades ago. It is evident that Certified Medical Directors serves as a leading role in providing clinical leadership, overseeing quality improvement efforts, ensuring regulatory compliance, and promoting residents/patient’s safety and quality of life.

California and Florida are the two states that require Certified Medical Director in all nursing homes. Maryland and Texas are the other two states working closely with legislation to mandate certification process.

The challenges we are facing this year

are many. In United States we have one geriatric service provider for ten thousand older adults. Workload, strained budgets, workforce shortages, government shutdowns, ongoing COVID crisis, and continuing provider burnout are few of the many challenges. I feel these realities will sharpen our resolve and accelerate innovation if we stand together with courage and grit. Reflecting deeply, and taking small practical steps, will allow our way out through it.

Each one of you has the compassion and empathy for what you do. We, here at MMDA prioritize our support for the workforce and maximize advocacy efforts for policy changes, payment models, and well-deserved recognition of our services

I am grateful for your support for MMDA and older adults, and excited to stride together for our goals.

Warm Regards,

Fatima A. Naqvi, MD, CMD  
President, MMDA

## Delaware Update — Medical Aid in Dying

By Cynthia Kuttner, MD, CMD; Medical Director, Community Living Center, Wilmington VA Medical Center; Co-Editor (DE), MMDA Bulletin; Treasurer, MMDA



On Jan. 1, 2026, Delaware joined 11 other states and jurisdictions to enact House Bill 140, the Ron Silverio/Heather Block End-of-Life Options Act. This bill permits physician-assisted dying in limited circumstances.

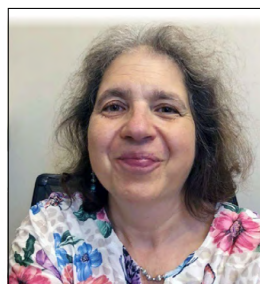
There are strict requirements for physician assisted death including a terminal illness with a life expectancy of six months or less, a competent patient, ability to request this at least once verbally and twice in writing. A surrogate cannot make the request even if there is a previous advance directive stating a desire for physician assisted death.

These requirements will definitely limit its application to the PALTC setting. How-

ever, it would be prudent to plan in advance for valid requests and how they will be handled.

The other jurisdictions and states allowing physician assisted death are California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maine, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington State.

Delaware has also put forward House Bill 191, which prohibits non-human entities such as artificial intelligence chatbots from being licensed as health care professionals. Additionally, these entities cannot use



professional titles such as doctor or nurse practitioner. Delaware joins many other states in forming a commission to explore the implications of artificial intelligence in our state.

Finally, there have been headlines in Delaware newspapers regarding threats

by the Justice Department to cut federal funding to states and cities that they deem “sanctuary cities” as of Feb. 1, 2026. If this does come to pass, it could affect Medicaid and Medicare funding to nursing homes and providers throughout the state of Delaware.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

One (1) Membership Year: January to December

**MMDA –  
The Mid-Atlantic  
Society for Post-  
Acute and Long-  
Term Care Medicine,  
Inc.**

Maryland  
Washington, DC  
Delaware  
Chapter of PALTmed

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Credential(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (REQUIRED) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (office) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

I have served as a Medical Director for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

I have served as a clinician in long-term care for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

**Yes, I would like to Join or Renew MMDA!**

**Membership  
Fees:**

**General:** Physicians, APNs, PAs in practice \_\_\_\_\_ \$150

**Affiliate:** Nurses, DONs, DDSs, CNSs, DPMs, and other IDT members \_\_\_\_\_ \$75

**Emeritus:** Retired \_\_\_\_\_ \$40

**Students** of all disciplines, **Residents**, and **Fellows** \_\_\_\_\_ \$0

**TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment  
Methods:**

**PAYMENT OPTIONS:**

You may go to the MMDA website at <https://midatlantic.paltmed.org/> and pay using a credit card that will be processed through our Stripe account.

Check enclosed. Please make checks payable to **MMDA**.

Visa       MasterCard       American Express

**Check  
Payments:**

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Payments:**

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP code of billing address \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_  
*(as it appears on the card)*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**I am interested in working on the following committee(s)** – Each are for 1-year terms.

Quality Assurance/Patient Care       Education/Program

Finance       Public Policy       Membership

**Mailing  
Payment  
Address:**

**MMDA – The Mid-Atlantic Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine, Inc.**  
3123 Breakwater Court, West Palm Beach, FL 33411

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Join MMDA: <http://bit.ly/3UPLzAj>

# MMDA Testifies in Front of Maryland’s House of Delegates’ Health Committee



he hearing on HB 931, the medical director bill, took place on Feb. 26, 2026, in front of the Health Committee at the House Office Building

in Annapolis, MD

Thank you so much for all the support and contributions!

There were seven of us who supported the Bill with amendments. Maryland Delegate Terri Hill, MD, shared before we testified, that she would like the two-facility cap to be taken out of the bill – as MMDA had recommended. For information on MMDA’s official position on HB 931, see our written testimony on page 5.

After Delegate Hill, we all presented our parts including Dr. Fatima Sheikh, Dr. Sadia Baqai, Cliff, Allison from Leading Age, Donna from Life-Span/ACHA, and myself.

There were expected questions about why certification should be a mandate instead of the education requirement

that’s already in place. Fatima Sheikh, Sadia, Cliff stated the reasons explicitly and clearly. The last testimony was given by a freshmen student who volunteered in a nursing home last summer. His presentation was very powerful and impactful.

I would like to take a moment to thank all of you and especially Alex and Gaby whose support was timely and amazing. I want to thank Dan, Mike, Chris, and SAC committee who have guided me and all of us! I want to thank Ian, the MMDA board and all the MMDA team (past and present), we worked endlessly and patiently to get here.

Let’s continue to move forward!  
Yours Truly,

Fatima Naqvi, MD, CMD, HMDCB, WCC, FAAFP; President, MMDA



From L-R: Dr. Sadia Baqai, Dr. Fatima Sheikh, Dr. Fatima Naqvi, and Allison Roenigk Ciborowski, President & CEO, LeadingAge Maryland

## Research Interventionists Wanted to Work With Assisted Living Residents With Dementia

Seeking two part-time (15-19 hours/week) individuals interested in joining our research team to implement a specialized activities intervention with assisted living residents with dementia. The interventionists will be expected to be at the assisted living sites located in the greater Baltimore area at least three weekdays per week. Training will be provided for the interventionists related to human subjects research, study procedures and protocols pertaining to the project. If interested, contact Jennifer Klinedinst, PhD, RN, MPH, at [klinedinst@umaryland.edu](mailto:klinedinst@umaryland.edu).

March 2026



February 24, 2026

Maryland General Assembly  
Legislative Services Building  
90 State Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401

House Health and Government Operations Committee  
Re: House Bill 931 – Nursing Homes – Medical Directors – Requirements  
Position: Support with Amendment  
Hearing Date: February 26, 2026

**Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and Members of the Committee:**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 931.

We are writing in support of HB 931 and its goal of strengthening clinical leadership and accountability in Maryland’s nursing homes. However, we respectfully urge the Committee to amend the bill to remove or modify the provision limiting a physician from serving as a medical director for more than two facilities.

**Support for Certification and Transparency**

HB 931 takes important steps to improve quality in nursing homes by requiring designated medical directors to hold an approved medical director certification or be actively working toward such certification. Nursing home residents are among the most medically complex and vulnerable individuals in our health care system. Ensuring that medical directors have specialized training and expertise in post-acute and long-term care medicine will help improve quality oversight, regulatory compliance, and resident outcomes.

Additionally, the bill’s requirement that the Maryland Department of Health maintain an online directory of nursing home medical directors promotes transparency and accountability. Families, residents, and stakeholders deserve to know who is responsible for clinical leadership within their facilities. Public access to this information strengthens trust in the system.

**Concern Regarding the Two-Facility Limit**

While we strongly support the certification and transparency provisions of HB 931, we have concerns about the provision prohibiting a physician from serving as a designated medical director for more than two licensed nursing homes.

Maryland, like many states, faces workforce shortages in long-term care. Recruiting experienced physicians to serve as nursing home medical directors is already challenging, particularly in rural or underserved areas. An arbitrary two-facility cap could unintentionally reduce access to qualified medical leadership, especially for facilities that rely on shared medical directors across systems or geographic regions.

Not all facilities are the same in size, complexity, or staffing structure. Some experienced and highly qualified medical directors are fully capable of effectively overseeing more than two facilities without compromising quality. A rigid numerical limit does not account for these differences and may create unintended operational and financial burdens for nursing homes.

**Recommendation**

We respectfully urge the Committee to amend HB 931 by removing the two-facility-limitation. With this amendment, HB 931 would meaningfully strengthen nursing home clinical leadership without creating unintended workforce challenges.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Yours Truly,

Fatima Ali Naqvi, MD, CMD, HMDCB, WCC, FAAFP; Medical Director, Ingleside at Rock Creek; President MMDA; Editor-in-Chief, MMDA Bulletin Newsletter; and Assistant Professor, George Washington/Medical Faculty Associates

**The following signatories are respectfully submitted:**

Tania A. Alchalabi, MD; Assistant Professor of Medicine, The GW Medical Faculty Associates

Sadia Baqai, MD, CMD; Aligned Partners

Stefan David, MD, CMD; Veterans Affairs

David Sterling Dunn, MD, CMD; Muti-Facility Medical Director

Elisa Gil-Pires, MD, FACP, CMD, CPE; Executive Vice President Medical Affairs, CMO, Medical Director, Charles E. Smith Life Communities

Robert L. Jayes, MD, FACP; Professor of Medicine, Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine; Medical Director, House Call Program, George Washington University Medical Faculty Associates

Cynthia Kuttner, MD, CMD; Medical Director of the Community Living Center, Wilmington VA Medical Center

Susan M. Levy, MD, FPALTC, CMD

John Loomer, MD; Chief Medical Officer, Aligned Partners

Clifford Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, PsychoGeriatric Services

Dorothy Seay, MD, CMD; Chief Medical Officer, Five Star Physician Services

Fatima Sheikh, MD, MPH, CMD; Chief Medical Officer, FutureCare Health & Management Corp.

# Recap of MMDA’s 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference

By Elisa Gil-Pires, MD, FACP, CMD, CPE; Co-Editor (MD), MMDA Bulletin; Vice President, MMDA; and Executive Vice President Medical Affairs, CMO, Medical Director, Charles E. Smith Life Communities, Rockville, MD

**N**ovember 8, 2025 was a special day for MMDA. We hosted our 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference: *Leading with Compassion, Advancing with Knowledge*. I am incredibly grateful to our wonderful Education Committee led by Drs. Elisa Gil-Pires and Karen Cousins without whom this and other annual conferences would not be possible.

We spent the day among 78 medical directors and medical practitioners from Maryland, Washington, DC, and Delaware. Thirty-three of these were first-time attendees. All conference surveys were overwhelmingly positive and attendees across the board felt the conference was informative, engaging, and well planned. Attendees commented that all the speakers were fantastic and they should be invited to future conferences.

Special appreciation is conveyed to all our sponsors and vendors who generously contri-



Conference co-chairs Karen Cousins (L) and Elisa Gil-Pires

bute to the overall cost of this conference. We are grateful to our eleven sponsors, and their verbal feedback was very positive. They appreciate it when the medical directors and practitioners engage with them and it’s a terrific opportunity for us to learn about many things outside of our daily practice.

We want to again acknowledge and congratulate all our Award Winners. The esteemed **2025 Berman Award** was well deserved by Barbara Resnick, PhD, CRNP.

The committee was also honored to present Karen Cousins, DO, CMD, with the prestigious **2025 Steve Levenson Medical Director of the Year Award**. And lastly, Lorrie Zelenski, PA-C, received the **2025 Clinician of the Year Award**.

We were fortunate to have five poster presentations ranging from a high school student to a PhD. This represented work done by the University of Maryland Nursing School. Ann Hagan, PhD(S), MSN, took first place in the poster awards, followed by Edward Zhu, high school intern with second place, and Elisha Oduro, BSN, RN, for third place.

We delivered thank you letters to all our speakers and presenters. They are the backbone of our conference and ensure it is a success every year. A special thank you also goes to our host this year, Ingleside at Rock Creek and our President Dr. Fatima Naqvi who graciously hosted all of us with a wonderful venue, beautiful food, and friendly associates.

Our Education Committee met to debrief and review feedback and reports about the 2025 conference. They recently convened to begin

planning the next one. Stay tuned for teasers and get excited for MMDA’s 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference 2026, to be held on Saturday, Oct. 3, 2026.



From L-R: Dr. Damien Doyle, 2025 Berman Award recipient Dr. Barbara Resnick, and Dr. Fatima Naqvi



L-R: Dr. Cecelia Cai; Dr. Fatima Sheikh, 2025 Clinician of the Year Lorrie Zelesnick, PA-C; and Dr. Fatima Naqvi



From L-R: Dr. Fatima Naqvi; 2025 Medical Director of the Year Award winner, Dr. Karen Cousins; and Dr. Cecelia Cai

# AI in Nursing Homes: Amplifying Compassion Through Data

By Steven Buslovich, MD, CMD, MS – Chief Medical Officer, Senior Care, PointClickCare

**A**rtificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming how we deliver, document, and coordinate care in nursing homes. Rather than replacing clinicians, AI serves as a clinical partner, reducing cognitive load, automating routine tasks, and freeing us to focus on what truly matters: empathy, and patient connection.

In my recent presentation at the MMDA annual conference, I emphasized that AI is not the future. It's here today. Predictive analytics, ambient documentation, and chart summarization tools are already helping long-term and post-acute care (LTPAC) providers identify risks earlier, streamline workflows, and improve quality outcomes. From fall prevention to hospital readmission



prediction, AI tools are turning raw data into actionable insights that support both clinical and operational excellence.

The power of AI lies in augmentation, not automation. When used responsibly, AI enhances our capacity to deliver exceptional, person-centered care. For instance, PointClickCare's Predictive Return to Hospital (pRTH) model integrates real-time data to alert care teams before adverse events occur, helping clinicians intervene sooner and improving resident safety.

However, progress must be balanced with principles. AI systems reflect the data they are trained on, which means bias and inequity can persist if left unchecked. Responsible AI demands transparency, data integrity, and continuous clinical oversight. At PointClickCare, our approach integrates an

interdisciplinary team of clinicians, engineers, and ethicists to ensure that every AI solution upholds trust, privacy, and accountability.

As our industry shifts toward value-based care, AI will be indispensable. By improving risk identification and enabling predictive care planning, AI helps ensure accurate reimbursement and better outcomes for high-need patients. Estimates suggest that by 2030, AI could save U.S. healthcare up to \$150 billion annually, but its greatest value is in restoring time and compassion to the bedside.

AI won't replace clinicians, but clinicians who use AI will excel while those who don't fall behind. As leaders, our charge is to guide this transformation responsibly, embracing curiosity over fear and viewing AI not as a threat, but as a trusted ally in elevating care quality and human connection.

## PALTmed's 2026 Clinician of the Year Announced

**E**lizabeth Galik, PhD, CRNP, is the 2026 Clinician of the Year. The newest of the four Excellence Awards, Clinician of the Year was created to recognize a practitioner in the PALTC setting who embodies excellence in patient/resident care, which Dr. Galik certainly does.



*Elizabeth Galik,  
PhD, CRNP,  
FAAN, FAANP*

She is a nurse practitioner in long-term care and community-based settings through clinical practice with the Sheppard Pratt Health System. In addition, she is a professor at the University of Maryland School of Nursing, where she teaches in the Adult-

Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Program and conducts research to improve care practices for older adults with dementia and their caregivers in long-term care.

She was nominated by several current and former members of the PALTmed Board of Directors. They said, in part, "We are thrilled to write this letter of support for

Dr. Galik. She exemplifies the high standards associated with [this award]. Her work has altered the philosophy of care for those with severe dementia from being custodial and propagating disability to a philosophy in which function is optimized, and the quality

of life of older adults is maintained."

Like her fellow award recipients, Dr. Galik is honored and humbled to be selected as Clinician of the Year. She notes, "My clinical practice with older adults living with dementia in post-acute and long-term care settings has always inspired and informed my scholarly and educational pursuits.

"Working with residents, families, and the interdisciplinary team has been the highlight of my career, and to be recognized for this work by a professional organization that values clinical practice is truly meaningful," she added.

# SAVE THE DATE!

## MMDA's 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual CONFERENCE



**EMPOWERING PALTC FOR TODAY'S CHALLENGES  
LEVERAGING AI, POLICY & CLINICAL UPDATES IN YOUR PRACTICE**



**Saturday, Oct. 3, 2026**



The Mid-Atlantic Society for  
Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine, Inc.




**INGLESIDE**  
AT ROCK CREEK

3050 Military Road, NW  
Washington, DC 20015

Visit our website



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 <https://connect.paltmed.org/midatlantic/home>

 [MMDAwebsite@gmail.com](mailto:MMDAwebsite@gmail.com)

MMDA serves medical directors, attending physicians, advanced practice nurses, and consultant pharmacists in SNFs throughout Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, D.C.