Behavioral Health Integration
About me

- Born and raised in West Virginia; graduated from WVU undergrad and medical school
- Practicing psychiatrist in Atlanta, GA
- Experience as a public health administrator, patient advocate and medical society lobbyist
- Held leadership positions in the AMA and APA
- First Black woman to serve as AMA president
- Chair, AMA Opioid Task Force since 2014
COVID-19 and its impact on mental health

• Nearly 1 in 5 COVID-19 patients developed a mental health issue — e.g., depression, anxiety, or dementia — within 3 months of diagnosis.

• A retrospective study of COVID survivors found “substantial neurological and psychiatric morbidity in the 6 months after COVID-19 infection,” with the greatest risk to those with severe illness.

Source: The Lancet Psychiatry
Integrating mental and behavioral health care

Policy:

Supports parity of coverage for mental illness, alcoholism, substance use and eating disorders; (H-185.974)

Supports health care policies that ensure access to and payment for integrated medical, surgical, and psychiatric care regardless of the clinical setting; (H-345.983)

Supports increasing public awareness, reducing stigma and expanding patient access to quality care for depression and other mental illnesses; (H-345.984)

Encourages all physicians to acquire the knowledge and skills to recognize, diagnose and treat depression and other mental illnesses; (H-345.984)

Supports competent mental health care and outreach for at-risk communities; (H-345.984)
Goals for successful integration

• Drive integration in new and existing value-based payment models.

• Expand, train and diversify the workforce for integrated care teams.

• Promote the use of EHRs, telehealth and other technology to support integrated care.
Removing burdensome regulations for telemedicine

- Working to remove burdensome regulations that prevent health care providers from offering telemedicine.

- CMS removed restrictions – allowing more flexibility for Medicare patients.

- Bipartisan Telehealth Modernization Act
The BHI Collaborative: *Who we are*

**Mission:** Catalyze effective and sustainable integration of behavioral and mental health care into physician practices *(with an initial focus on primary care)*

**Vision:** Identification and management of behavioral health conditions (mild/moderate) is a core competency of primary care practices, not an exception

**Member Organizations:**
- American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- American College of Physicians
- American Medical Association
- American Osteopathic Association
- American Psychiatric Association
Empowering practices to implement BHI

- Educational programming
- Resources and Tools
  
  Visit: ama-assn.org

  Search: BHI Overcoming Obstacles

- Practice Testing/Piloting
- Sustained Viability