



# CALIFORNIA Health Policy Forum

## Speaker Bios

### **Bob Chason, MEd**

Independent Health Care Consultant  
Davis Neighbors Inc.

Bob Chason is an independent consultant in health care working with Davis Neighbors Inc., an initiative to design a new neighborhood in Davis for today's seniors that promotes health and wellness and blends seamlessly into the community. Previously, Chason served UC Davis as an administrator for 25 years, retiring in 2006 as CEO of the UC Davis Medical Center. He was CEO of the Medical Center, which includes a 530-bed hospital and affiliated outpatient centers, a primary care network of physician practices in 10 Northern California communities, and more than 6,300 employees, for four years. Before that he was the Center's chief operating officer for 12 years. For the Medical Center, Chason oversaw an expansion of UC Davis' telemedicine program and helped establish the Center for Health and Technology to explore new approaches to distance medicine and distance learning. Prior to joining the UC Davis Medical Center, he served 15 years in the university's Office of Student Affairs, first as assistant and associate vice chancellor and then as acting vice chancellor. He also spent a dozen years in academic administration at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Chason earned a bachelor's degree from Wilmington College and a master of education degree from Miami University.

### **Mark Helmar**

Chief  
Long-Term Care Division  
California Department of Health Care Services

Mark Helmar's career with the Department of Health Care Services and the Health and Human Services Agency has spanned 37 years. As Chief of the Long-Term Care Division, he manages several programs that provide Medi-Cal services to frail elderly and disabled persons to improve their quality of life and keep them safe and healthy in their communities. To further California's Olmstead Mission to provide services in the least restrictive environments, his division focuses on streamlining program requirements and expanding the number of persons served by Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly, the Assisted Living Waiver Pilot Project, the Senior Care Action Network, the Nursing Facility/Acute Hospital Waiver, and the California Partnership for Long-Term Care. Helmar worked on the reorganization of the department and the creation of the California Department of Public Health. Before that, he spent five years as Licensing and Certification's Chief for Field Operations for the Southern Region. His six years in the Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC) provided him with financial and data processing project management experience. From 1985 to 1991, he was an assistant secretary for program and fiscal affairs at the agency, planning and budgeting for the

implementation of the Safe Water and Toxics Substance Control Act (Proposition 65); and developing, planning, and budgeting California's four-year, billion-dollar strategy for the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Helmar graduated from Sacramento State College in 1970, obtaining a bachelor's degree in anthropology, with honors.

**David L. Mandel**

Supervising Attorney  
California Senior Legal Hotline/Sacramento Senior Legal Services  
Legal Services of Northern California

David L. Mandel joined the California Senior Legal Hotline (a special program of Legal Services of Northern California) as staff attorney in 1994 and became its program manager in 1997. Previously, he worked as a writer and editor for 20 years, for the Sacramento Bee beginning in 1985 and before that in Israel, where he lived for 11 years. Mandel has worked to improve coordination among senior legal services programs in California and to seek state support for them, serving on the 2002 legislative Task Force on Senior Legal Services and subsequent task forces regarding standards and reporting. He helped found a Senior Legal Services Section of the Legal Aid Association of California and the National Association of Senior Legal Hotlines, of which he was recently elected chair for the next two years. Mandel also manages Sacramento Senior Legal Services, which is closely coordinated with the hotline as it seeks to grow and establish its own distinct identity. In 2007, California's Senior Legal Hotline became a HUD-approved housing counseling agency, just in time to be inundated by seniors facing the threat, reality, or aftermath of foreclosure. Mandel has written and spoken extensively at conferences on the delivery of legal services, addressing issues of technology, ethics, housing counseling, and innovative practices at senior legal hotlines. He earned his bachelor's degree at New York University and his law degree from Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

**Catherine A. Sarkisian, MD, MSPH**

Associate Professor of Geriatrics  
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Catherine Sarkisian is associate professor of geriatrics at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, where she first joined the faculty in 2000 as a clinical instructor. Previously, she was a clinical instructor of medicine at Jacobi Hospital, Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. Her extensive research on aging focuses on such issues as expectations regarding aging among older adults and their physicians, self-care interventions, and methods for increasing walking among aging adults. She is currently a core leader of the UCLA Claude Pepper Older Americans Independence Center and principal investigator of a trial to increase walking among sedentary older Latinos. She's also been a principal or co-investigator on eight additional projects supported by the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Aging. Dr. Sarkisian received her undergraduate degree in philosophy from Princeton University, her MD from the University of California, San Francisco, and her MSPH from the University of California, Los Angeles. She completed her internship and residency (including a chief residency in primary care) at The New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center. At UCLA, she was a Geriatric Medicine Fellow and a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholar. In 2008, the American Geriatrics Society honored Dr. Sarkisian with its Special Recognition Award for Outstanding Service.

**Amy Shin, PharmD**

Chief Administrative Officer

On Lok Inc.

Amy Shin joined On Lok with considerable executive-level health plan management experience. She has worked in both for profit and not-for-profit health plans around the San Francisco Bay Area and understands managed care well. She also has experience in and understands the Pharmacy Benefit Management arena. Dr. Shin oversees On Lok Lifeways' marketing, public relations, Medicare Part D operations, provider contracting, member services, information systems, facilities, purchasing, fund development, as well as the operations of On Lok's subcontractor for two centers, the Institute on Aging. She holds a bachelor's degree in microbiology and immunology from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) from the School of Pharmacy at the University of Southern California. She completed her general residency with an emphasis in administration at the University of California Irvine Medical Center. Dr. Shin also completed a two-year leadership fellowship with the California HealthCare Foundation.