

# Stephen Shaya, M.D. Shares Insights on Mental Health at NOBCO Conference with Moderator Jesse Thomas

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Stephen Shaya, M.D., Executive Servant Leader, J & B Medical, recently spoke at the National Organization of Black County Officials, Inc. (NOBCO) 37th Annual Economic Development Conference, with moderator Jesse Thomas, Retired CEO, Medicaid at BlueCross Blue Shield of North Carolina.

The fireside chat, titled "The Behavior of Mental Health," focused on the issue of health equity and parity between mental and physical health. The discussion delved into the topic of Social Determinants of Health as influencers, discussing how they can affect mental health outcomes. Dr. Shaya also highlighted the issue of the fentanyl epidemic and substance use disorders as a significant disproportionate driver in the community.

Dr. Shaya's extensive experience in healthcare allowed him to provide some sobering facts on this topic. He stated, "More law enforcement officers and firefighters are more likely to die by suicide than in the line of duty. Suicide is the third leading cause of death in African Americans 15 to 19 and the second leading cause of death for individuals 25 to 34. More than 40% of African American women experience maternal mental health symptoms, which is nearly twice the rate of all other women, yet they get treated 50% less than others."

Moderator Jesse Thomas, a retired health plan CEO and citizen public servant, facilitated the discussion with his expertise in healthcare and background as a person of faith. Thomas emphasized the importance of addressing mental health issues and promoting health equity in communities. He urges our policymakers, healthcare providers, and payers to collaborate with a



Stephen Shaya, M.D., Executive Servant Leader at J & B Medical , Managing Director at Akkad Holdings and Jesse Thomas Retired CEO, Medicaid at BlueCross Blue Shield of North Carolina

"fierce urgency of now" to drive whole-person integrated behavioral and physical health solutions to achieve sustainable, thriving families and communities.

The fireside chat was part of NOBCO's effort to empower and transform populations into more sustainable communities. The organization supports the service to counties and communities of elected and appointed county officials throughout the United States by providing education, training, and a clearinghouse of best practices in government. Its primary focus areas are health equity, civil rights, economic development, public safety, and environmental justice.

Dr. Shaya's insights and expertise contributed to a meaningful discussion on mental health and its impact on communities. He advocated for greater educational opportunities for African Americans in healthcare. Recent studies have shown that African Americans, when living in counties with more African American physicians, lived longer with lower disparities in mortality rates. The NOBCO Conference provided an excellent platform to address the nation's critical issues and promote positive change. The organization looks forward to continuing to empower and support county officials and leaders throughout the United States.

Dr. Shaya quoted Dr. Brock Chisholm, the first Director-General of the World Health Organization who was a psychiatrist and shepherded the notion that mental health and physical health were intimately linked and said "without mental health there can be no true physical health."

#### About NOBCO:

The National Organization of Black County Officials (NOBCO) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization founded in 1982. Its mission is to empower and transform populations into more sustainable communities by providing resources, education, training, and promoting best practices in government. NOBCO supports elected and appointed county officials across the United States in areas such as health equity, civil rights, economic development, public safety, and environmental justice.

#### About Akkad Holdings:

Akkad Holdings is the family office of Stephen Shaya, M.D., whose family owns J & B Medical. J & B is a world-class family of businesses that span across all aspects of medical-related care, including the following: insurance-covered products, national managed care contracts, medical-surgical products, retail home-care products, technology solutions, and serves as one of the largest third-party billers of consumable medical products in the United States. J&B owns HNC Virtual Care Solutions, which manages a telehealth company serving customers worldwide.

#### About J&B Medical:

J&B Medical is a recognized market leader in healthcare focused on enhancing the quality of life, improving clinical outcomes, and reducing healthcare costs for consumers and businesses. Services include insurance-covered and emergency-medical supplies, retail at home, veterinary products, and medical technology solutions. J&B Medical is a nationally certified Women's Business Enterprise. For more information, please visit us at [JandBMedical.com](http://JandBMedical.com).

Statistics Information:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1615885/>

[http://rudermanfoundation.org/white\\_papers/police-officers-and-firefighters-are-more-likely-to-die-by-suicide-than-in-line-of-duty/](http://rudermanfoundation.org/white_papers/police-officers-and-firefighters-are-more-likely-to-die-by-suicide-than-in-line-of-duty/)

<https://ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news-all-day/2022/11/28/study--suicide-is-second-leading-cause-of-death-among-adults-25-34>

<https://www.marchofdimes.org/black-maternal-mental-health-week>

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