

MHPA Honors Highmark Wholecare's Ellen Duffield with Joy Wheeler Leadership Award

Medicaid Health Plans of America (MHPA) will present Ellen Duffield, president and CEO, Highmark Wholecare with the Joy Wheeler Leadership Award.

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-- Medicaid Health Plans of America (MHPA) – the leading trade association for the Medicaid managed care industry – will present Ellen Duffield, president and CEO, Highmark

Wholecare with the association's Joy

Wheeler Leadership Award during MHPA25 Sept. 10-12, 2025, at the Sheraton Kansas City at Crown Center.



Highmark Wholecare's Ellen Duffield

"As a member of the Executive Committee, Ellen played a critical role in guiding the strategic direction of MHPA, our collective efforts to advance awareness, education, and adoption of Medicaid managed care, and the transformative impact it's had on our members and the communities we serve," said MHPA President and CEO Craig A. Kennedy, MPH. "Her leadership focused on MHPA's strategic and operational goals has helped advance the interests of Medicaid beneficiaries within managed care nationwide. We're thrilled to present her with this distinction."

"Throughout my career, I've focused on health-related social needs and whole-person care, and I believe our continued emphasis in these areas will have far-reaching impact on the health care ecosystem," said Duffield. "I'm honored to receive this award and excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for our industry to accelerate innovation, explore new solutions, and adopt technologies that drive better outcomes."

The Joy Wheeler Leadership Award is given to an individual in honor of his or her tireless work helping the association fulfill its strategic and operational goals.

MHPA25 is the premier Medicaid managed care conference in the country, attracting

approximately 500 health plan executives, health care professionals, state and federal policymakers, patient advocates, and business partners for two days of networking and education on tracks dedicated to Access to Care, Complex Care, Hot Topics, and Policy. MHPA25's theme is "The Rhythm of Progress: Medicaid's Beat in the Heartland."

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About MHPA

Founded in 1995, Medicaid Health Plans of America (MHPA) is the only national association that solely represents the interests of the Medicaid managed care industry. Through its advocacy and research work, MHPA supports innovative policy solutions that enhance the delivery of comprehensive, cost-effective, and quality health care for Medicaid enrollees. MHPA works on behalf of its 160-member health plans which serve nearly 52 million Medicaid enrollees in 40 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. MHPA's members include for-profit and non-profit national, regional, and single-state health plans that compete in the Medicaid market. Visit mhp.org for more information.

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