



Schwartz Center Announces New Board Members William T. Curry Jr., MD, Chief Medical Officer of Academic Medical Centers at Mass General Brigham, Melissa A. Fitzpatrick, MSN, RN, FAAN, President of Kirby Bates Associates, and Sandhya Rao, MD, Chief Medical Officer and Vice President of Health and Medical Management at Blue Cross Blue Shield Massachusetts

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BOSTON (June 12, 2025)— [The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare](#), an international nonprofit dedicated to partnering with healthcare organizations to advance compassion for patients, care teams, and their healing relationships, has announced the appointment of three new members to its board of directors: William T. Curry Jr., MD, Melissa A. Fitzpatrick, MSN, RN, FAAN, and Sandhya Rao, MD.

Dr. William Curry serves as the Mass General Brigham chief medical officer for academic medical centers and is an attending surgeon and professor in the Department of Neurosurgery. He first came to Mass General Hospital (MGH) in 1997 as a surgical intern after graduating from Harvard College and Cornell University Medical College; following his neurosurgical residency and fellowship in neuro-oncology at MGH, Dr. Curry became a staff neurosurgeon in 2004. He is a national leader in the neurosurgical care of patients with tumors of the brain, skull-base, and spine.

Ms. Melissa A. Fitzpatrick is currently president of the healthcare executive search and advisory firm Kirby Bates Associates, where she also serves as liaison to their parent company Jackson Healthcare. She also serves on the boards of Gwynedd Mercy University and UNC Health Rex. With more than 35 years of healthcare leadership experience, Melissa's previous roles have included vice president of critical care and cardiac services at the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and chief nurse executive at Duke University Medical Center. She has also served as editor-in-chief of the *Nursing Management Journal*, chief healthcare strategist at the SAS Institute, and the first vice president and chief clinical officer at Hill-Rom.

Dr. Sandhya Rao has been the chief medical officer and senior vice president at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts since 2020. Dr. Rao's previous roles include vice president for clinical strategy for Haven, medical directorships for population health at Partners Healthcare (now Mass General Brigham) and the Mass General Physicians Organization, business analysis at McKinsey and Co., and primary care practice at MGH and Brigham and Women's Hospital.

"We are delighted to welcome Dr. Curry, Ms. Fitzpatrick, and Dr. Rao to our board," said Michael Gustafson, MD, MBA, chief executive officer of the Schwartz Center. "Their diverse backgrounds in healthcare leadership and passion for improving both the provider and patient experience will be valuable as we continue to expand our reach and impact."

"The Schwartz Center's unwavering commitment to advancing compassion for patients, care teams, and their healing relationships deeply resonates with my own mission to elevate human connection and quality outcomes in healthcare," said Ms. Fitzpatrick. "I'm honored and energized to support this vital work."

With these leadership changes, the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare continues to strengthen its commitment to championing compassionate, patient-centered care through innovative programs, advocacy, and research.

About the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare

The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare **partners with healthcare organizations to advance compassion for patients, care teams, and their healing relationships**. There are nearly 800 healthcare organizations throughout the U.S., Canada, the UK, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand running Schwartz Center programs. For three decades, we have been at the forefront of championing meaningful human connections in healthcare. Through our efforts, we have reduced psychological distress in care teams and increased empathetic care for patients – all of which drive improved health outcomes.

Visit us at theschwartzcenter.org.

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