



**61st Session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development (CSocD61) side event hosted by American TelePhysicians, Blue Ridge Impact Consulting, and AIM Education and Research Society**

**Monday, February 13th, 9:45 AM**

Watch on UN Web TV: <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1n/k1nxxhry9>

**Overview of Dialogue**

*Employment is a social determinant of access to healthcare.  
Digital health ecosystems are a solution.  
Digital health ecosystems are a social protection measure.*

**Speakers**

**Dr. Waqas Ahmed**, Founder & CEO, American TelePhysicians

**Kellie Kubena**, Rural Health Liaison, USDA

**Jonathan Berkowitz, MD**, Medical Director, Emergency Telehealth, Northwell Health

**Ameena Zia, PhD (moderator)**, Founder, Blue Ridge Impact Consulting

**Fikayo Benson, MD, MPH**, Director of Global Goals, United Nations Association, Chicago Chapter

**Cecilia Torres, MPPA**, President, United Nations Association, Greater Chicago Chapter

**Sherri Johnson, JD, MBA**, SVP, Business Development, American TelePhysicians

## Concept Note

**Priority theme:** *Addressing the social impact of multifaceted crises to accelerate recovery from the lingering effects of the pandemic through the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*

### **Side event: Re-Imagining Digital Health Systems to Create Access to Services, Workforce Development, and Innovative Education**

**Challenge:** We know that employment is a determinant of health equity and deficiencies in labor markets (especially since the pandemic) have further marginalized communities from access to healthcare. Disruption in labor markets has also led to increased informal employment (among immigrant, migrant, refugee, and other vulnerable populations) with no health protection system in place. How do we ensure that those not employed or in informal, short-term, temporary employment situations have access to healthcare?

**Solution:** Create digital health ecosystems as a social protection measure to ensure that individuals do have an option.

**Implementation of Solution:** Through partnerships, coalition building, and strategic measures, different stakeholders must come together and make commitments, including infrastructure development, private sector buy-in, and collaboration with regional and local systems.

### **Agenda**

*Moderator: Aameena Zia, PhD, UN Representative, & CEO of Blue Ridge Impact Consulting*

Introduction.

**Cecilia Torres, MPPA President, United Nations Association, Greater Chicago:** conference remarks/the challenge.

**Fikayo Benson, MD, MPH:** overview of Global Goals 8 & 10 & links to digital health access.

**Waqas Ahmad, MD, CEO of American Telephysicians:** digital healthcare ecosystems.

**Kellie Kubena, Rural Health Liaison, USDA:** the reality of access to healthcare in rural communities and the role of the USDA's latest innovations to improve in rural health.

**Sherri Johnson, VP American Telephysicians:** infrastructure & workforce development challenges in rural communities

**Waqas Ahmad, MD:** Rural Solutions in Action

**Jonathan Berkowitz, MD, Medical Director, Emergency Telehealth, Northwell Health:** digital healthcare solutions at Northwell and Ukraine, and patient impact.

**Waqas Ahmad, MD:** pandemic case study: CoronaX

Bridging the urban healthcare divide.

**Sherri Johnson, VP American Telephysicians:** role of the private sector.

**Ameena Zia, PhD:** Closing.

Session hashtags: #CSocD61 #EndInequality #DecentJobs #SocialProtections  
#EveryoneIncluded

*This dialogue was convened by Blue Ridge Impact Consulting, in facilitation with AIM Education and Research Society and in partnership with American TelePhysicians in fostering dialogue on solutions approach to UN Global Goals.*