

**News Release**  
**April 11, 2024**



## **NAACOS Co-Founder, Longtime CEO Clif Gaus Will Retire from NAACOS**

*Search Committee Formed to Find Gaus' Successor by This Fall*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – National Association of ACOs President and CEO Clif Gaus, Sc.D., will retire this fall from the organization that he helped co-found in 2012 and has since served as president and CEO. At the time of its founding, NAACOS was and still is the only national organization dedicated to serving ACOs, which rely on groups of physicians, hospitals, and other providers voluntarily working together to improve care coordination, improve quality of care, and lower costs for patients. The NAACOS Board of Directors has formed a search committee to find Gaus' replacement and expects to name a successor this fall.

When NAACOS was founded by ACO executives organizing themselves to respond to new opportunities to participate in the Medicare ACO models, there were a little more than 100 Medicare ACOs. Today, there are more than 600 Medicare ACOs, serving more than 13 million beneficiaries, nearly 20 percent of all of Medicare. Under Gaus' leadership, NAACOS counts nearly 70 percent of them in its membership. NAACOS works to advance ACOs through shared learning and education and proactive advocacy with Congress and federal agencies. The organization has grown to represent organizations more broadly interested in value-based care, including in commercial plans, Medicaid, and Medicare Advantage.

Over the 12 years since its founding, Gaus has steered NAACOS through a series of challenges and opportunities, including multiple overhauls of the Medicare Shared Savings Program, the permanent ACO program in Medicare. During Gaus' tenure, NAACOS membership has grown to include the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation models as they evolved from the Pioneer ACO Model, the Next Generation ACO Model, to Direct Contracting, and now ACO REACH. In 2017, NAACOS seeded money to help establish the Institute for Accountable Care, a data- and research-focused organization serving as the analytical arm of the industry and for which Gaus also serves as Chair of the Board of Directors.

As NAACOS has helped grow the ACO movement within Medicare, its members have also expanded their reach in commercial value-based plans, as today there are nearly 800 commercial ACO contracts with more than 30 million lives served by ACOs. Nearly 600,000 clinicians participate in ACOs. Today, NAACOS today counts 17 staff members, and its biannual conferences now regularly draw more than 600 attendees each. Gaus has a rich history of work in public service, health policy and healthcare leadership. He worked in the Nixon, Ford, Carter, Clinton and Obama administrations and for providers and payers.

“The 11-plus years as CEO have been an immensely enjoyable chapter in my 55-year long career. When we founded NAACOS, everyone on the founding board believed we were the future of health care in America, and we still do,” said Gaus. “I am sure the board and new CEO will continue to lead the transformation of our health care system to a place where all patients can be sure they are receiving the highest quality care and value.”

“Clif has been an instrumental leader in the ACO movement, back to the passing of the Affordable Care Act. To this day, he is a stalwart supporter of health care transformation that is driven by providers taking accountability for total cost of care and outcomes to achieve better, more accessible, affordable and equitable care for patients, families and communities. We wish him all the best as he turns the page on this chapter of his career,” said Emily DuHamel Brower, M.B.A., NAACOS board president and senior vice president of clinical integration and physician services for Trinity Health.

The NAACOS board of directors has appointed a search committee that has engaged Korn Ferry in a national search to find NAACOS’s next president and CEO. The search will be co-led by Tom Giella, Chairman, Healthcare Services, and Lorraine Lavet, Association Practice Leader. For additional information regarding this search, please contact Kelly Adamson at [Kelly.Adamson@kornferry.com](mailto:Kelly.Adamson@kornferry.com).

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**About NAACOS.** The National Association of ACOs (NAACOS) represents more than 9 million beneficiary lives through Medicare’s population health-focused payment and delivery models. NAACOS is a member-led and member-owned nonprofit of more than 430 ACOs in Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial insurance working on behalf of health systems and physician provider organizations across the nation to improve quality of care for patients and reduce health care cost.