

Biosketch

Aakash Shah is a practicing emergency medicine physician at Hackensack Meridian Health. At Hackensack Meridian Health, he is also helping develop a system-wide response to the opioid crisis as well as engaged in several state-level policy and nonprofit initiatives that affect the health of his patients.

Aakash currently serves as the Medical Director of New Jersey Reentry Corporation where he is developing systems to better meet the health care needs of the justice-involved population, with an emphasis on connecting those with opioid use disorder to medication-assisted treatment. His work at NJRC has received the bipartisan endorsement of five former New Jersey Governors, several local editorial boards, and major healthcare systems.

Prior to his work with NJRC, Aakash was the Founder and Executive Director of Be Jersey Strong, which trained students to serve as community health workers. During the third open enrollment period, Be Jersey Strong recruited over 500 students – two-thirds of whom spoke a second language with over 50 languages represented – from over 20 campuses to help inform New Jerseyans of their options for coverage. The initiative represented one of the largest and most diverse efforts to connect the insured to coverage in the nation and was honored by then President Barack Obama at the White House for its impact.

Aakash has also staffed the health policy transition committee for Governor Phil Murphy of New Jersey, served on the health policy councils of three gubernatorial campaigns, and advised the New Jersey Senate Majority Leader and members of the United States House of Representatives. In these roles, his portfolio has included initiatives to combat the opioid crisis, determine the health impact of burn pit exposure during military service, expand paid family leave, secure financing for women's health, establish Medicaid Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs), and implement the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

He has conducted original research in these areas at Rutgers University, Boston Children's Hospital, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and Oxford University. He is the author of several peer-reviewed publications, op-eds, and policy reports as well as the anthology *The Soul of a Patient*.

He completed his residency in emergency medicine at Rutgers – Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. He obtained his MD from Harvard Medical School. He completed his MBA and MSc in Comparative Social Policy from Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. He received his BA and BS from Ursinus College. He currently serves on the board of trustees for Integrity House and Ursinus College, and previously served on the executive board of New Leaders Council – New Jersey.