

Patrice A. Harris, MD, MA, FAPA, a psychiatrist from Atlanta, was elected to the American Medical Association Board of Trustees (BOT) in June 2011 and was voted in as Secretary (2014-2015) and Chair (2016-2017). She was elected the 174th President of the AMA in 2019, the first African American woman to hold the position.

Active in organized medicine her entire career, Dr. Harris has served on the board of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and was an APA delegate to the AMA. She has also been a member of the governing council of the AMA Women Physicians Congress, testified before and served on AMA reference committees, and has served on AMA work groups on health information technology, SGR and private contracting. The AMA BOT appointed her to the AMA Council on Legislation in 2003, and she was elected by the council in 2010 to serve as its chair.

Dr. Harris has held many leadership positions at the state level as well, including serving on the board and as president of the Georgia Psychiatric Physicians Association and on the Medical Association of Georgia's Council on Legislation, its Committee on Constitution and Bylaws, and its Membership Task Force. She was also the founding president of the Georgia Psychiatry Political Action Committee. In 2001 Dr. Harris was selected Psychiatrist of the Year by the Georgia Psychiatric Physicians Association. In 2007 she was inducted into the West Virginia University Academy of Distinguished Alumni.

Governing themes in Dr. Harris' professional life are a passion to improve the lives of children and service to others. Starting with medical school at West Virginia University, followed by a psychiatry residency and child psychiatry and forensics fellowships at Emory, and then as the Barton senior policy fellow at the Emory University School of Law, she has worked for children both clinically and in the advocacy arena. At Emory she addressed public policy for abused and neglected children before the Georgia legislature and in public education programs. Dr. Harris has also given invited lectures and presentations on the opioid epidemic, mental health, childhood trauma, integration of health services, health equity, and the intersection of athletics and health. She has appeared on numerous media outlets--CNN, Wall Street Journal, Huffington Post, New York Times, Frontline Medical News, MSNBC, NBC, NPR--discussing topics such as the opioid epidemic, prescription drug availability and cost, scope of practice, access to care, mental health parity, obesity, and gun violence.

As past director of Health Services for Fulton County, Ga., which includes Atlanta, Dr. Harris was the county's chief health officer, overseeing all county health-related programs and functions, including a wide range of public safety, behavioral health, and primary care treatment and prevention services. She spearheaded the county's efforts to integrate public health, behavioral health and primary care services. Dr. Harris also served as medical director for the Fulton County Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.

Dr. Harris continues in private practice and consults with both public and private organizations on health service delivery and emerging trends in practice and health policy. She is an adjunct professor in the Emory Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. An avid sports fan, she spends her spare time cheering on her Atlanta Falcons and West Virginia University Mountaineers.