

Nikki Romanik

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Clearance: Top Secret/SCI (8/2023)

- Highly accomplished public health leader with deep expertise in policy development and execution in pandemics, biosecurity, and global health.
- Over 15 years of leadership in both national and international initiatives, having led outbreak response and preparedness planning for the White House, CDC, and the WHO, with a clear track record of driving results.
- Particular focus on early detection and response to biological threats, the role of the US government in vaccine development and distribution, and building deep stakeholder engagement.
- Recognized for her ability to navigate difficult crises in complex political environments, with a particular emphasis on public private partnerships and engaging civil society organizations when creating an all of society response to health crises.
- Brings a unique blend of strategic vision, operational effectiveness, clear communication, and dedication to managing health challenges that deliver results.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Deputy Director and Chief of Staff (Inaugural)
Office of Pandemic Preparedness and Response Policy (OPPR)
Special Assistant to the President
Executive Office of the President, The White House
August 2023 – Present

- Deputy Director and Chief of Staff of the legislatively mandated OPR, working as a Special Assistant to the President to stand up the newest component of the White House by strategically designing and developing a component that focuses on:
 - Coordinates responses to multiple ongoing biological threats and engaging with public and private sector partners to create a broad and effective pandemic and biosecurity response capability
 - Deep focus on medical countermeasure development and overcoming supply chain constraints.
 - Driving strategic coordination across US agencies with focus on clear communication, early response, and effective engagement to counter domestic and global biological threats;
 - Ensuring that the United States can quickly detect, identify, and respond to such threats.
- Established office structure, led hiring and continues to manage OPR team

- Manages interagency coordination for policy development for entire domestic preparedness and response portfolio
- Leads White House Domestic Responses for both the Mpox and Marburg Responses
- Provides daily coordination and oversight with interagency, including building out domestic response priorities and objectives

**Senior Policy Advisor, National Mpox Response Coordination Team
Office of COVID-19 Response, Executive Office of the President, The White House August 2022 – August 2023**

- Part of the leadership team at the White House that helped reduce Mpox cases by over 99% from the peak of the outbreak.
- Stood up White House National Mpox Response Structure, Global Mpox Response Team Structure and lines of effort.
- Spearheaded all domestic policy work and was liaison to White House Global Mpox Response Team to ensure bidirectional communication between domestic and global responses.

Global Access

- Spearheaded diplomatic engagement with World Health Organization (WHO) to support and encourage rapid decision-making in the name change of the disease to mpox and most importantly addressing the community's concerns over racist connotations of the original name.
- Created PEPFAR funding and resource flexibilities that were leveraged in country to support the Global Mpox Response. Worked closely with vaccine manufacturer and global regulatory agencies to facilitate global vaccine donations

Flexible Funding

- Created funding flexibilities to support an effective mpox response in light of lack of Congressional support, including working with existing programs such as the HRSA Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, CDC HIV and STD funding, and SAMHSA programs focused on substance abuse and mental health.
- Worked with non-HHS agencies such as HUD to allow housing support for people affected by mpox and those in need of isolation and quarantine space.

Vaccination

- Spearheaded deep community relationship building efforts, addressing concerns and boosting vaccine confidence.
- Spearheaded pharmacy engagement on testing and vaccine administration
- Supported the amendment of the PREP Act to facilitate vaccine administration by pharmacists and other health care providers

- Rapid implementation of intradermal dosing to allow a national vaccination program to be effective by shifting national vaccinations to ID dosing.
- Collaborated with CDC to release jurisdictional vaccination coverage and modeling to communicate urgency for vaccination to prevent future mpox outbreaks.

Testing/Diagnostics

- Collaborated with CDC to increase testing capacity from 6000 tests per week to 80,000 tests per week by working with, among others, diagnostics manufacturers and academic medical centers, and created the development of a multichannel test to diagnose mpox and HSV.

Community Outreach and Health Equity

- Built a community driven response by participating in over 700 engagements with key stakeholders and community leaders in the LGBTQI+ population
- Worked closely with other HHS agencies to engage Black and Brown LGBTQI+ communities to ensure the response effectively reached all populations.
- Collaborated with FDA and CDC to allow for changes in location of vaccinations to address stigma.
- Collaborated with CDC to eliminate barriers to people accessing vaccines by changing requirements for detailed risk assessments and eliminating other barriers.
- Worked with CDC to build in learnings from the mpox response for future outbreak responses.

Technical Advisor, Country Readiness Strengthening Department (CRS) World Emergencies Programme, World Health Organization May 2022 – August 2022

- Spearheaded assistance to multiple countries in Africa to assess their risks and readiness, identify gaps, to prioritize necessary actions and to take remedial measures around COVID and other emerging diseases, creating a strategic partnership engagement strategy to the recently developed Country Readiness Strengthening (CRS) Department within the World Health Emergencies Programme.
- Building these partnerships required deep engagement with the private sector, NGOs, civil service organizations, academics, coalitions, implementing partners, community leaders, and funding partners for the CRS Department.
- Directed implementation and transition of the Health Systems Response Connector (HSRC), the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) that helped bring more tools to fight COVID to low-income countries rapidly.
- Was the WHO Lead for COVID-19 Test and Treat Technical Assistance Coordination Workgroup

Senior Advisor, HHS COVID-19 Response
Immediate Office of the Secretary, US Department of Health and Human Services February – April 2022

- Lead CDC technical advisor for Test to Treat Program, a presidential initiative that provides faster, easier access to lifesaving COVID-19 treatments for those at high risk of severe illness
- Spearheaded technical advisory efforts for equitable access to COVID-19 treatments.
- Collaborated with agencies across HHS and the White House to address vulnerable communities' concerns about access and protection during the COVID response. This work required building strong relationships with advocates from the disability community to address their immediate concerns.
- Supervised and led coordination across a range of HHS agencies and the White House to ensure equitable access and clear communication for the Test to Treat program

White House and HHS COVID-19 Liaison, CDC
CDC COVID-19 Response and HHS Countermeasures Acceleration Group
May 2021 – January 2022

- Directed vaccine distribution programs across the U.S., including rollout for children, immigrants, and at-risk populations.
- Established high-level strategic proposals for the White House regarding vaccine priorities, equity, and data reporting.
- Liaised with domestic and global partners to ensure swift, cohesive responses.
- Directed and reviewed all responses to White House and HHS regarding the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program.
- Co-lead of Vaccine Task Force, while continuing other roles. Supervisor and final reviewer for all vaccine data in the vaccine task force, including media inquiries and troubleshooting vaccine data errors, demonstrating technical competency and ensuring quality control.

Special Assistant to the Director
Office of the Director, Office of the Chief of Staff, CDC
June 2020 – October 2022

- Spearheaded portfolios for CDC Director's response efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic, Ebola outbreak, and polio eradication.
- Coordinated visits with senior government officials (such as the President and Vice President and other high-level officials (cabinet secretaries and global leadership)

Public-Private Partnership Practitioner & Gift Review Panel Manager
Office of the Director, Office of the Chief of Staff, CDC
August 2018 – March 2020

- Directed the inaugural Gift Review Panel, establishing systems for ethical and transparent gift reviews.
- Reviewed public-private partnership projects, identifying risks related to technology transfer, conflict of interest, and public relations.
- Coordinated interagency collaborations to ensure strategic alignment with public health goals.

Special Assistant to the Senior Advisor to the Director and Chief of Staff
Office of the Director, Office of the Chief of Staff, CDC
August 2017 – April 2018

- Prepared high-level communications, briefing documents, and policy recommendations for senior leadership.
- Coordinated initiatives with federal partners, including leading discussions on strategic public health initiatives.

Logistics Specialist
Office of the Director, Office of the Chief of Staff, CDC
December 2016 – July 2017

- Spearheaded coordination efforts for high-profile events and visits from national and international health leaders.
- Directed complex logistics for VIP visits, ensuring seamless collaboration across internal CDC divisions.

Health Communication Specialist, Eagle Medical Services Contractors
National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases, CDC
May 2015 – December 2016

- Established training programs for U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to enhance risk management at U.S. borders.
- Directed communications for the CARE Airport Entry Screening Program during the Ebola crisis, overseeing quarantine stations nationwide.

Executive Director
Georgia Chapter, For a Day Foundation
April 2008 – May 2015

- Founded and expanded the Georgia chapter of a nonprofit focused on providing emotional support to children with serious illnesses.
- Secured corporate partnerships and increased program reach, organizing therapeutic events for hospital patients.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Microbiology
Indiana University | Bloomington, IN
1999 – 2003

Doctor of Medicine
American University of Antigua, School of Medicine | St. John's, Antigua
2005 – 2009

**AWARDS, RECOGNITION, PUBLICATIONS, SPEAKING
ENGAGEMENTS**

- Demetre Daskalakis, MD, MPH (Co-Lead Author); Nikki Romanik MD (Co-Lead Author), Ashish K. Jha, MD, MPH 2024. "Lessons From the Mpox Response" JAMA; 331(5):387-388. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2813923>
- CDC/ATSDR Honor Award: Excellence in Frontline Public Health Service
- Chief of Staff Champion: 2017, 2018
- Civil Service Award: Excellence in Emergency Response (International)
- Ryan White Infectious Disease Fellow: 2002-2003

Keynote Speaker at:

- World Vaccine Congress DC, Europe, West Coast (2022-2024) (4x)
- American Public Health Association (APHA) 2023
- ASTHO Annual Conference 2023
- Human Rights Campaign- Mpox & Beyond: How Community Addressed Mpox & Future Public Health Emergencies July 24. 2023
- Pandemic Response Institute
- NACCHO Preparedness Summit "Public Health Emergency Early Response Framework" (2023)
- World AMR Congress (2024)
- Ginko Bioworks Ferment Conference, "Global Biosecurity in Practice"
- CSIS (multiple times)

- NYC Health Hospitals Elmhurst “Outbreak Preparedness and Response”
- Kyle House- Investing to Prevent the Next Pandemic: Highlighting Best Practices in Early Disease Detection and Surveillance of Known Pathogens

Guest Lecturer at:

- Boston University’s Center on Emerging Infectious Diseases “Reflecting on One Year of the Mpox Response”
- Yale School of Public Health, “The role of data in public health equity and innovation
- Harvard University National Preparedness Leadership Initiative
- University of Nebraska Global Center for Health Security
- Brown School of Public Health (2x)
 1. “Pandemic Game Changers”
 2. Learning and Applying Lessons From the 2022 Mpox Response
- Georgetown University