



Department of Veterans Affairs

Senior Executive Biography

Shereef Elnahal, M.D., M.B.A.

Under Secretary for Health

Dr. Shereef Elnahal is Under Secretary for Health at the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). He was nominated by President Joseph R. Biden and confirmed by the United States Senate on July 21, 2022. As the Under Secretary for Health, Dr. Elnahal directs a health care system with an annual budget of approximately \$102.2 billion, overseeing the delivery of care to more than 9 million enrolled Veterans. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is the largest integrated health care system in the United States, providing care at over 1,300 health care facilities, including 171 VA Medical Centers and 1,120 outpatient sites of care of varying complexity (VHA outpatient clinics). VHA is the nation's largest provider of graduate medical education and a major contributor to medical and scientific research. More than 73,000 active volunteers, 127,000 health professions trainees, and more than 362,000 health care professionals and support staff are an integral part of the VHA community.



Dr. Elnahal is physician leader who previously served as President and Chief Executive Officer of University Hospital in Newark, NJ from 2019 through 2022. Dr. Elnahal led University Hospital through the COVID-19 public health emergency. The hospital has served as a model for urban hospital and regional response efforts. In addition to his leadership during the pandemic, Dr. Elnahal oversaw substantial improvements in care quality and patient safety at University Hospital, leading to improvements against national benchmarks.

Prior to his time at University Hospital, Elnahal served as New Jersey's 21st Health Commissioner, appointed to the Cabinet post by Governor Phil Murphy and confirmed unanimously by the New Jersey Senate. During his nearly two years as Commissioner, he expanded the New Jersey Health Information Network, an interoperability platform that allows for electronic exchange of patient health information among healthcare providers. He worked closely with New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy on her Nurture NJ campaign to help improve infant and maternal health outcomes and reduce health disparities—a mission he continued at University Hospital, with its top tier maternal health services. He also made strides in curbing the opioid epidemic, granting funding to institutions to facilitate data sharing and public health reporting, and marked NJ as the first state in the nation to allow EMS responders to use buprenorphine in the field to prevent withdrawal after naloxone.

Dr. Elnahal previously served as VA's Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Quality, Safety, and Value from 2016 through 2018, overseeing national policies around quality of care for the VHA, and as a White House Fellow in the VA from 2015-16. During that time, he co-founded the VHA Innovation Ecosystem, a program that continues to foster the spread of innovation and best practices that improve Veteran care across the nation.

Dr. Elnahal holds an M.D. from Harvard Medical School and an M.B.A. with Distinction from Harvard Business School.