



## Elena Nicolella

Elena Nicolella is the Executive Director of a large health and human services organization which serves all six New England States. The New England States Consortium Services Organization (NESCSO) is a non-profit organization with a primary mission to serve the employees of state government health and human service agencies. The NESCSO seven-member Board includes the Secretaries or Commissioners of Public Health in the six New England States and the Vice Chancellor for Commonwealth Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

As Executive Director, Elena manages employees and consultants with an annual budget of over \$2.5 million. Among the many tasks she faces with the current COVID-19 testing and vaccine rollout, NESCSO also regularly convenes a New England based peer-learning community with representatives from departments of public health, insurance, business regulation and attorney general offices focused on how states can use their policy and regulatory tools to address consolidation in the healthcare market.

Prior leadership positions include Associate Director, Office of Policy and Innovation at the Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services. In this role Elena led cross-department initiatives, working with the Department of Corrections and the Department of Human Services to facilitate prompt access to Medicaid for people leaving prison and identifying Medicaid funding for Department of Children, Youth, and Families initiatives.

Beginning in 2009 Elena was the Associate Director of the Rhode Island Medicaid Program overseeing a staff of 180 employees and a \$2 billion budget. She implemented and monitored healthcare programs and long-term support for 200,000 Rhode Islanders. She implemented significant changes to long-term care programs to increase access to community based services. Additionally, her work included overseeing contracts with managed care organizations and collaborating with and actively supporting input from consumers and other stakeholders.

***“I consider myself more of a pragmatist than a visionary. I do not believe that conflicts with the notion of having a vision, but my vision is very grounded in what I want to change about today. I enjoy collaborating with visionaries: the role I would seek to play is to help to understand how “visions” might be executed.”***

Ms. Nicolella earned a BA from New York University with a major in French Literature and a minor in Spanish. Her graduate work was at the Boston University School of Public Health where she earned a Master’s Degree, with a concentration in healthcare financing.

Some recent publications and correspondence include the following:

- “Effective Medicaid Pharmacy Program”* NESCSO 06/2019
- “The New England States’ All-Payer Report on Primary Care Payments”* NESCSO 01/2020
- “In bid to boost public service, don’t discount vital work government employees do every day”*

Letter to the Editor, Boston Globe 11/15/2020