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Clif has a diverse background as a public servant, entrepreneur, and health executive. He served in senior healthcare positions under Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, and Clinton and was advisor to CMS in the Obama Administration. In the early 1970's and 80's, in the Social Security Administration and as Associate Administrator for Policy, Research and Demonstrations of HCFA (now CMS), he directed the development of a broad range of innovations in health care financing and delivery, including the DRG hospital payment system, RBRVS physician payment system, Medicare Hospice Programs and Medicare payment of Physician Assistants. He also managed the legislative affairs and the Office of the Actuary. While working for the Social Security Administration in the mid-70s, he wrote the memorandum for the Carter transition team that recommended the merging of Medicare and Medicaid into a single Agency, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA). It was implemented in the first 100 days of the new Administration.

From 1994 to 1997 he was the Administrator of the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (now AHRQ). Major accomplishments were developing the CAHPS Patient Survey now used throughout the healthcare system, Patient-Centered Clinical Practice Guidelines, and Evidence-Based Practice Centers.

In the late 90's he held the position of Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer of WellPoint Health Networks Inc (now Anthem), managing a staff of over 3000 employees responsible for all of WellPoint's physician and hospital networks, medical policy, public affairs, human resources, market research and product branding. In advance of today's value-based payment models, he led a company-wide redesign of the physician network contracting focused on incentives to the medical groups for improved quality and outcomes. Prior to WellPoint, he was Senior Vice President of the national Kaiser Permanente Health System in Oakland, California. From 2002-10 he served on the Board of Directors of the Stanford Children's Hospital, Stanford University.

Clif was co-founder and President/CEO of the National Association of ACOs (www.naacos.com) from 2012-2024. NAACOS is the only national organization owned and managed by ACOs. It advances policy in value-based care and provides shared learning experiences through conferences, webinars, forums and work groups.

He also founded other organizations, including the Georgetown University Health Policy Center, and the Association for Health Services Research (now Academy Health) in the early 1980's. He holds a master's degree in health administration (MHA) from the University of Michigan and a Doctor of Science (Sc.D.) in health care management from The Johns Hopkins University.