



BIOGRAPHY

Joseph W. Thompson, MD, MPH

Surgeon General for the State of Arkansas

Director, Arkansas Center for Health Improvement

Professor, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

General Pediatrician

Dr. Joe Thompson's work is centered at the intersection of clinical care, public health and health policy. He is responsible for developing research activities with robust data collection, health policy and collaborative programs that promote better health and health care in Arkansas. Dr. Thompson works closely with and often serves as a bridge between the Governor's office, the Arkansas legislature and public and private organizations across the state to develop relevant health policy initiatives.

Dr. Thompson has led vanguard efforts in planning and implementing health care financing reform, tobacco- and obesity-related health promotion and disease prevention programs. He has worked with Governor Mike Beebe, Arkansas's legislative leadership and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to develop a creative alternative to Medicaid expansion under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. In addition, Dr. Thompson is guiding Arkansas's innovative initiatives to improve health system access, quality and cost including a systematic, multi-payer overhaul of Arkansas's health care payment system.

Previous accomplishments include serving as the lead architect of the Tobacco Settlement Act of 2000 and instituting the Arkansas Health Insurance Roundtable. Under his leadership, ACHI helped pass the Clean Indoor Air Act of 2006, documented the state's success in halting progression of the childhood obesity epidemic, and passed a tobacco excise tax increase to provide funding for more than two dozen health initiatives.

Dr. Thompson has been at the forefront of both Arkansas's leading-edge efforts against childhood obesity and in national efforts to reverse childhood obesity as the former Director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity.

He currently serves on the Arkansas Board of Health and is past President of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Nationally, Dr. Thompson serves on the board of the Campaign to End Obesity and of AcademyHealth. He is author of numerous articles and publications that reflect his research interests in the areas of health and health care.

Dr. Thompson earned his medical degree from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and Master of Public Health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He served as the RWJF Clinical Scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Luther Terry Fellow in Preventive Medicine advising the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Health in Washington, DC, and the Assistant Vice President and Director of Research at the National Committee for Quality Assurance in Washington, DC. In 1997, he served as the First Child and Adolescent Health Scholar of the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (then the U.S. Agency for Health Care Policy and Research) before returning to Arkansas.