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CNY Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Alliance Appoints Melissa Rowe as Executive Director

SYRACUSE, NY — The CNY Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Alliance is pleased to announce the appointment of Melissa Rowe as its new Executive Director, effective January 13, 2026. A strategic senior leader and lifelong Central New Yorker, Rowe brings extensive experience in building mission-driven coalitions and cross-sector partnerships spanning healthcare, education, and community-based organizations. Rowe succeeds founding Executive Director Royale Scuderi, who will retire in February 2026. Having led the organization alongside founder Anne Messenger since its inception six years ago, Scuderi has successfully established the Alliance as a vital regional resource.

Rowe was selected following a comprehensive search involving the Alliance's Executive Committee, staff, and leadership. The selection committee was immediately struck by her "head and heart" approach—pairing high-level strategic expertise with a deep, personal empathy for the patient experience. As a cancer survivor, Rowe possesses a profound, firsthand understanding of the complexities involved in navigating life-altering illnesses, bringing a unique and compassionate perspective to the challenges faced by those suffering from Lyme and other tick-borne diseases.

"Melissa doesn't just understand our mission from a management perspective; she understands it from a human one," said Danielle Cummings, Board Chair. "Her blend of professional rigor and genuine compassion will be instrumental as we continue to elevate the Alliance and serve our community. "Rowe most recently served as the Manager of Quality and Accreditation at Oneida Health, where she led organizational performance improvement and worked collaboratively with clinical and operational leaders to advance

patient safety and outcomes. Her extensive background also includes over five years of experience with Upstate Medical University, providing her with a sophisticated awareness of the clinical world that is vital to the Alliance's mission. A proud veteran of the United States Army, Rowe is currently a candidate for a Doctor of Education at SUNY Empire State University. Her career has been defined by convening diverse constituencies and strengthening public-private partnerships to support awareness, prevention, advocacy, and systems-level improvement.

About the CNY Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Alliance The CNY Lyme & Tick-Borne Disease Alliance is a collaborative organization dedicated to addressing the growing threat of tick-borne illnesses in the Central New York region. By bridging the gap between clinical expertise, research, and community advocacy, the Alliance works to improve outcomes for patients and families through every stage of their health journey. Through education and prevention initiatives, the Alliance serves as a vital resource for a more responsive and compassionate approach to complex health challenges. For more information, visit [\[cnylymealliance.org\]](http://cnylymealliance.org).

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