



**James I. Merlino, M.D.**  
**Executive Vice President and Chief Innovation Officer**

James Merlino, MD, is the Executive Vice President and Chief Innovation Officer at The Joint Commission. In this role, Dr. Merlino focuses on the transformation of The Joint Commission's services utilizing data and innovation to advance health care safety and quality worldwide.

Previously, he served as the Chief Clinical Transformation Officer at Cleveland Clinic overseeing enterprise strategy, business development, safety, quality, experience, and continuous organizational improvement. Earlier, he also served as Chief Experience Officer and Associate Chief of Staff at Cleveland Clinic, vice-chair of the Digestive Disease Institute, and was a practicing staff colorectal surgeon. Prior to Cleveland Clinic, he served as the Chief Transformation Officer for Press Ganey Associates.

Dr. Merlino is recognized as an expert in health care strategy, improving safety, quality, and patient experience, and has extensive experience both domestically and internationally. He is a renowned speaker with over 400 invited presentations including on strategies to redefine care around the needs of the patient. He has led C-suite strategic sessions with more than 70 of the largest and most successful health care organizations in the U.S., and regularly coached CEOs, C-suite leaders and health care boards on health care strategy and cultural change.

Dr. Merlino was named to *HealthLeaders Magazine's* list of "20 people who make health care better" in 2013 and has consistently been on Becker's list of top 50 experts in health care safety, and was recognized by Beckers as a top Chief Transformation Officer. He has been widely published in academic papers and released his first book, "*Service Fanatics: How to Build Superior Patient Experience the Cleveland Clinic Way*" in 2014. He is a co-editor of the best-selling safety book "*Zero Harm: How to Achieve Patient and Workforce Safety in Healthcare*," released in 2018. He has also received numerous awards in health care.

Dr. Merlino is a member of the American College of Health Care Executives, American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, American College of Surgeons, and American Medical Association.

Dr. Merlino earned his bachelor's degree in business administration from Baldwin-Wallace College, Berea, OH, and his medical degree from Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland, OH. He completed his general surgery training at University Hospitals of Cleveland and his colorectal surgery fellowship at Cleveland Clinic. He was also an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) fellow.