



Media Release

Contact:
Amy Webb, Office of Communications
(501) 682-8650

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DHS NAMES BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES DIRECTOR

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – The Department of Human Services (DHS) has selected Jennifer Gallaher to head the Division of Behavioral Health Services (DBHS). Gallaher has served as an independent behavioral health consultant and Director of Substance Abuse Treatment Services for the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

As a consultant with DHS over the past two years, Gallaher successfully assisted our substance abuse treatment providers as they worked to build capacity and receive national CARF accreditation. At her own treatment center, Gallaher used an integrated approach so that clients with both mental health and substance abuse issues could receive coordinated care. DBHS also is moving toward an integrated model of care for behavioral health services.

During Gallaher's career in Oklahoma state government, she was responsible for an \$80 million budget, monitoring more than 80 treatment programs for contract compliance, and providing clinical technical assistance to treatment providers. She also assisted in implementing integrated behavioral health services and worked closely with treatment providers and contractors to promote the use of evidence-based treatment practices.

"We were fortunate to find someone who understands an integrated approach to behavioral health is important for clients," said DHS Deputy Director Janie Huddleston, who has served as the Division's interim director since June.

DHS Director John Selig said that in addition to Gallaher's extensive experience in behavioral health, her work in Arkansas showed she would be a good fit as DBHS Director.

"Jennifer is familiar with the landscape and needs of behavioral health services in Arkansas," Selig said Friday. "She will be a vital member of the DHS team."

Gallaher's experience with substance abuse treatment and mental health providers gives her insight into the trials facing many states.

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“Promoting recovery from mental health and addiction issues has always been a priority of mine,” Gallaher said. “As we learn more about the challenges faced by those suffering with mental health issues and addiction, we grow as behavioral health professionals. The current move toward more community-based care is exciting, and I’m honored to be part of Arkansas’s efforts to improve the lives of all its citizens.”

Gallaher will assume her new role by Oct1.

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