



Media Release

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DBHS Director to Leave; Experienced Department Leaders to Take On Interim Roles

The Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) director of the Division of Behavioral Health Services (DBHS) announced that she plans to leave her position Oct. 15 to return to work in the private sector.

DBHS Director Joy Figarsky, who has nearly 30 years of experience working in the behavioral health field, joined DHS in June 2013.

“Joy has been instrumental in leading our plans to transform the state’s behavioral health system,” said Janie Huddleston, DHS Deputy Director. “She has worked tirelessly with clients and stakeholders to build changes into the system so we can better serve Arkansans with behavioral health needs. She will be missed.”

DBHS supports and funds the public behavioral health system in Arkansas, including mental health, substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery services. It also is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Arkansas State Hospital and Arkansas Health Center in Benton. Last fiscal year, more than 86,000 people accessed DBHS’s services.

Upon Figarsky’s departure, Dr. Charlie Green, currently Director/Commissioner of the DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS), will step in as Interim DBHS Director. Green has worked for the Department of Human Services for more than 15 years and has served as Director/Commissioner of DDS since 2003.

“DDS and DBHS have worked together many times to serve people who have both a developmental and mental health diagnosis so Charlie is very familiar with that system,” said

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Huddleston. “In addition, he is well versed in the work that is taking place as part of the state’s Health Care Payment Improvement Initiative and can easily step into that discussion.”

Jim Brader, the DDS Assistant Director for Compliance, will serve as Interim DDS Director in Green’s absence. Brader is an attorney who joined DHS in 2002. He is a 2000 graduate of the Bowen School of Law at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

DDS is responsible for the overall coordination of services for Arkansans with developmental disabilities.