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Michael K. Huff Named Acting Health Secretary

Governor Edward G. Rendell appointed Michael K. Huff, R.N., as acting Secretary of Health, effective Oct. 1.

Huff, who will be the first registered nurse to lead the Pennsylvania Department of Health, currently is the department's deputy secretary for health planning and assessment.

"Michael Huff is tremendously dedicated to the health of Pennsylvania's citizens and to the department he will lead," said Governor Rendell. "He has served the department in various capacities over the past 20 years and is highly regarded by health organizations across the state. We are fortunate that he has agreed to lead the Department of Health and work to address the varied challenges it faces daily."

As deputy secretary, Huff was responsible for monitoring, tracking and analyzing the public health status of Pennsylvania communities. He has developed and implemented a statewide health plan and coordinated public health programs within the department's district offices, state health centers and county/municipal health departments. Also as deputy secretary, he served as executive senior level manager of the Bureaus of Epidemiology, Laboratories, Emergency Medical Services, Health Planning and Community Health Systems, and the Offices of Public Health Preparedness and Health Equity.

Huff's previous positions within the department include director of the Division of Communicable Disease Prevention, director of the Division of Chronic Disease Intervention, acting director of the Office of Public Health Preparedness and director of the Bureau of Community Health Systems.

Before joining the department, Huff worked for the Lewistown Hospital, Hershey Medical Center and Geisinger Health Systems, where he held senior management positions in nursing and hospital administration. He was also responsible for strategic development and program evaluation of cancer, cardiac and women's health services, as well as clinical positions in the areas of medical-surgical, critical care, and emergency trauma nursing.

Huff's undergraduate and graduate education is in nursing from Penn State University and he has served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. He is a member of the Sigma Theta Tau National Nursing Honor Society.

He will succeed Health Secretary Everette James, who resigned Oct. 1.

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