



Beverly Cotton, DNP, RN

Director

Nashville Area

Indian Health Service

Beverly Cotton, DNP, RN, an enrolled member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, is the Director of the Indian Health Service Nashville Area. The IHS, an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, is the principal federal health care advocate and provider for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

As area director, Dr. Cotton is responsible for providing leadership in the administration of a comprehensive federal, tribal, and urban Indian health care system. The IHS Nashville Area covers a geographical area of 24 states located in the eastern, southeastern and mid-United States while serving 36 tribal nations located in 14 states.

Cotton previously served as the acting director for the IHS Office of Clinical and Preventive Services. As acting director, she was the principal advisor for policy development, budget formulation, and delivery of headquarters programs, services, functions, and activities related to clinical, preventive, and public health services throughout IHS.

Cotton joined IHS in 2011 as the national sexual assault nurse examiner coordinator and later established the Tribal Forensic Health Care Training Program. In 2013, she became the director for the IHS Division of Behavioral Health, leading a team of professionals in the development of new grant programs, training projects, and initiatives, including the Preventing Alcohol-Related Deaths grant program, Behavioral Health Integration Initiative, Zero Suicide Initiative, and a training series on trauma informed care.

Before joining IHS, she worked as a primary care pediatric nurse practitioner and in several registered nurse roles, including as the emergency department nurse manager for the Choctaw Health Center in Choctaw, Mississippi. Prior to her health care career, she worked as a detention officer for the Choctaw Police Department and as a Native youth summer counselor in the Youth Opportunity Program for her tribe.

Cotton holds an associate degree in nursing from Meridian Community College, a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Southern Mississippi, a master's degree in nursing from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and a doctor of nursing practice degree from Vanderbilt University.