



Indian Health Service Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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IHS Announces New Nashville Area Director

The Indian Health Service (IHS) announced the appointment of Beverly Cotton, DNP, RN, as the director of the Nashville Area of the Indian Health Service. Cotton, an enrolled member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, has served as acting director of the IHS Headquarters Office of Clinical and Preventive Services since April 2018. As area director, she will be responsible for providing leadership in the administration of a comprehensive federal, tribal, and urban Indian health care system. The IHS Nashville Area provides services to 36 tribes or nations with 23 tribally administered programs, four IHS federal direct care service unit programs, three urban Indian health programs, and a youth regional treatment center serving all area tribes.

“Dr. Cotton’s wealth of experience and leadership skills will be a welcome addition to the IHS Nashville Area as we continue to improve and provide access to quality health care services for American Indians and Alaska Natives,” said Rear Adm. Michael D. Weahkee, IHS principal deputy director. “I want to congratulate Dr. Cotton on her selection as area director and thank her for her years of dedicated service in fulfilling the IHS mission.”

Cotton joined IHS in 2011 as the national sexual assault nurse examiner coordinator and later established the Tribal Forensic Health Care Training Program. She served as the director for the IHS Division of Behavioral Health from July 2013 to March 2018, where she led 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. Cotton said she is looking forward to working closely with the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. and tribal and urban Indian organization leaders throughout the IHS Nashville Area.

“It is incredibly humbling as I reflect on the history of the work accomplished by past leaders and look towards the future as we partner with tribal leaders to fulfill the IHS mission. It is an extreme honor and privilege to serve as the new director of the IHS Nashville Area,” Cotton said.

Cotton is a board certified nurse practitioner in primary care pediatrics. She started her nursing career at the University of Mississippi Medical Center as a neonatal intensive care unit nurse. 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.

The Indian Health Service Nashville Area is the most geographically and culturally diverse area within IHS, posing unique challenges to staff and requiring the use of creativity, flexibility, and understanding in accomplishing the IHS mission. The Nashville Area is responsible for the provision of health services to 36 tribes or nations dispersed across 14 states, while also serving patients in 24 states in the eastern, southeastern, and mid-United States. For more information about the IHS Nashville Area, visit <https://www.ihs.gov/nashville/>.

The IHS, an agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives. Follow IHS on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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