



Beverly Cotton, DNP, RN

Acting Deputy Director for Field Operations

Indian Health Service

Dr. Beverly Cotton, DNP, RN, an enrolled member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, is the acting deputy director for field operations of the Indian Health Service (IHS). 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 acting deputy director for field operations, Dr. Cotton provides management oversight and resource allocation for four IHS Area Offices: Albuquerque, Navajo, Oklahoma City, and Tucson. The Indian health care system delivers comprehensive services to nearly 2.7 million eligible American Indians and Alaska Natives residing on or near reservations directly served by the IHS or through tribally contracted and operated health programs.

Cotton previously served as the director for the Nashville Area IHS, the largest geographic and culturally diverse region in the IHS, spanning 24 states and serving 36 tribal nations and 3 urban Indian health programs. Cotton served as the previous 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. 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 her Tribe's hospital 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.