



Indian Health Service Press Release

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Indian Health Service Announces Dr. Beverly Cotton as New Deputy Director for Field Operations

The Indian Health Service announces the appointment of Dr. Beverly Cotton, an enrolled member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, as the new IHS deputy director for field operations for four IHS Area Offices: Albuquerque, Navajo, Oklahoma City, and Tucson.

As the newest deputy director for field operations, Dr. Cotton provides management oversight and resource allocation to the four areas under her leadership. Dr. Cotton joins Rear Adm. Chris Buchanan and James Driving Hawk in this position, with each deputy director of field operations responsible for four IHS areas. IHS is the 18th largest public health care system in the nation.

“Dr. Cotton exemplifies the quality leadership that the Indian Health Service prides itself on,” said IHS Director Roselyn Tso. “She has dedicated her career to the health and well-being of American Indians and Alaska Natives—first as a direct care provider and then as a leader within IHS for over a decade. I could not be more confident entrusting our Albuquerque, Navajo, Oklahoma City, and Tucson Areas to her leadership.”

Dr. Cotton previously served as the director for the Nashville Area, the largest geographic and culturally diverse region in the IHS, spanning 24 states and serving 36 tribal nations and three urban Indian health programs. She also served as the previous acting director for the IHS Office of Clinical and Preventive Services, where 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. She has served as acting deputy director of field operations since September 2024.

“I am honored to serve as one of the deputy directors for field operations working in partnership with the area directors for the Albuquerque, Navajo, Oklahoma City, and Tucson Areas to deliver on the IHS mission,” said Dr. Cotton. “In this role, I look forward to executing on a common goal to streamline and maximize operational services.”

Dr. Cotton joined the 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 the 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.

Dr. Cotton holds an associate's 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 IHS, an agency in the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#), provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.8 million American Indians and Alaska Natives who belong to [574 federally recognized tribes](#) in 37 states. Follow the agency via social media on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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