



Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor
David R. Scrase, M.D., Secretary for Human Services Department
Brian Blalock, for Secretary Children, Youth and Families Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jodi McGinnis Porter

jodi.mcginis-porter@state.nm.us

505-476-7203 office; 505-670-4136 cell

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HSD and CYFD announce intentions to separate the roles of CEO for the Behavioral Health Collaborative and the director for the Behavioral Health Services Division

Bryce Pittenger named as interim CEO of the Behavioral Health Collaborative
Mika Tari named as acting director for Behavioral Health Services Division

Santa Fe, N.M. – Human Services Department (HSD) Cabinet Secretary David R. Scrase, M.D. and Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) Cabinet Secretary Brian Blalock announced plans to separate the roles of CEO for the New Mexico Behavioral Health Collaborative and the director for the New Mexico Behavioral Health Services Division, which were previously filled by a single individual. Bryce Pittenger is named as the interim CEO for the Behavioral Health Collaborative (20 percent of her time) and Mika Tari as the acting director for the Behavioral Health Services Division (100 percent of her time). HSD is actively recruiting to fill both positions with full time permanent individuals.

“The benefits of splitting these functions will provide more opportunities to collaborate with all executive departments like HSD, CYFD, Department of Health, Public Education Department, New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department and, the Corrections Department all of whom are working on behavioral health issues,” said Secretary David R. Scrase, M.D. “Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham has made it clear that addressing behavioral health issues in New Mexico is one of her top priorities.”

“This change will make it easier for state departments providing behavioral health care to receive proper support for their programs. This means more services reaching the right people in need,” said Secretary Brian Blalock. “We have been tasked with rebuilding the state’s community based mental health care system and this is an important step in supporting those new ventures.”

Bryce Pittenger will serve as interim CEO for the Behavioral Health Collaborative for 20 percent of her time. Pittenger will continue serving (80 percent of her time) as the director for the Behavioral Health Services Division for the Children, Youth and Families Department where she oversees children's behavioral health services; federal grants; forensic evaluation; wraparound services, family peer support, substance abuse program development; supportive housing programs, shelter care, and Medicaid licensing and certification activities.

Mika Tari will serve as the acting director for the Behavioral Health Services Division 100 percent of her time. Previously, Tari served as the deputy director of Program Services that included treatment and recovery. For Behavioral Health Services Division at HSD she managed the clinical operations and programs, including oversight of behavioral health clinical activities and resources. She’s certified in Stress Management, Developing High Performance Teams, Communication and Assertiveness, and Conflict Resolution by the American Management Association. Tari has a Master of Social Work from New Mexico State University and a Bachelor of Science from Kaplan University.

The Human Services Department provides services and benefits to more than 1 million New Mexicans through several programs including: the Medicaid Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Child Support Program, and several Behavioral Health Services.

The New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department provides an array of prevention, intervention, rehabilitative and after-care services as part of its mission to improve the quality of life for New Mexico children and their families.

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Office of the Secretary 1474 Rodeo Rd. P.O. Box 2348 Santa Fe, NM 87504 505-827-7750