September 12, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

It is with immense respect, deep appreciation and more than a small measure of sadness that I share the news that Toby Douglas will step down as Director of the Department of Health Care Services by the end of the year, ending a four-year term during which he led the state’s Medi-Cal program through unprecedented change and growth as California embraced the Affordable Care Act and expanded coverage for millions of uninsured residents.

As you know, Toby was one of the Governor’s earliest appointments on January 7, 2011 and had served in various leadership positions at the Department since 2005. The dynamic growth during his time as Director saw the addition of 3.5 million new Medi-Cal members, bringing total current enrollment to more than 11 million. He also guided the expansion of Medi-Cal managed care into every California county. Today, 76 percent of Medi-Cal members enjoy a more coordinated, integrated system of care provided through a managed care health plan. And as you may have noticed in last week’s Field Poll, the public appreciation of Medi-Cal is on the rise.

In advising me of his decision, Toby said, “Serving as Director of this Department has been exciting, rewarding and an incredible honor. I truly have mixed emotions about leaving a place where thousands of dedicated public servants work so cooperatively with committed, passionate stakeholders to improve California’s health care safety net. But I feel it’s time for new challenges. I will begin my search for a new professional opportunity that will allow me to continue to work for improvement in the quality of health care and health outcomes, while giving me more time to devote to the joys of family life.”

In addition to the success Toby has had in reforming and improving the Medi-Cal program, he has fostered a strong leadership team that will ensure a smooth transition, as well as continue our momentum toward achieving our ambitious policy initiatives. I will soon begin a process to identify candidates for the Governor’s consideration who have essential experience in health care policy at high levels, as well as the proven leadership capacity to guide a department responsible for the nation’s largest Medicaid program.
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Toby leaves a very large footprint on the landscape of California health care and we will all miss his intelligence, passion, leadership and energy at the Department, but we are very fortunate that Toby will take his considerable talents into the private sector and continue as a partner in the work of transforming health and health care in California.

Sincerely,

Diana S. Dooley
Secretary

DSD/mcv