



Commissioned Corps BULLETIN

Division of Commissioned Personnel • Program Support Center, DHHS

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Surgeon General's Column

The commissioned corps is a splendid and diverse company of people. It is that diversity that affords us the opportunity to more effectively carry out the Public Health Service mission. Within our 11 professional categories, just about every medical and public health discipline can be found. The structure and personnel system of the commissioned corps enables the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to better serve its very diverse mission—from program support and assessment of health, to health promotion and disease prevention and emergency response. Because of our mission and our ethics, we are challenged to continue to nurture diversity, relative to gender, race and ethnicity, culture and religion, age, levels of disability, and sexual orientation.

Not long ago, I finished reading an amazing book entitled *The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother*. In it, author James McBride tells the story of his life growing up interracial in Harlem, the son of a Jewish mother and a black father. His father died while McBride was still young, leaving him and his brothers and sisters to be raised alone by his Jewish mother, Ruth McBride Jordan. As is often the case, soon after his father's death, McBride began misbehaving and getting into trouble. In one incident, he reflects on how some of the neighborhood boys began teasing him about his white mother and asking how he could be black with a white mother. Upset, young McBride went home and related the incident to his mother. Ruth McBride lovingly consoled her son by telling him that God loved him and that color did not

matter. Trying desperately to understand, McBride asked his mother, "What color is God?" She pointed to a tear that had just landed from her cheek onto to her hand and replied, "God is the color of water."

I told this story in March to a group of 150 participants during the first Department-wide Diversity Conference, which grew out of the Secretary's Quality of Work Life Initiative and President Clinton's Conference on Race in America. The Union-Management Partnership Committee commissioned the HHS Diversity Steering Committee to lead the Department in ensuring diversity. They defined diversity as "the composition and richness that results from a variety of genders, races, cultures, disabilities, ages, languages, sexual orientations, ethnic groups, and religious backgrounds" and will focus on ensuring access, equity of opportunity, and inclusive policies and practices for all employees.

Traditional Approaches to Diversity

Most organizations and institutions in this country have operated out of one of three traditional approaches to diversity. The discrimination model of diversity acknowledges that discrimination has occurred by responding to the lack of diversity within an organization. To overcome the lingering effects of past discrimination using this model, an organization pursues a set of goals designed to address the lack of diversity in gender, race, ethnicity, and culture. The measure of success for this approach focuses on more than simply injecting color to decrease the appearance of discrimination; rather, success is reached when

an organization has reached the point of appreciation for all of the benefits that diversity can bring.

The second strategy is the market approach. This approach acknowledges the need for a diverse workforce in order to best answer the needs of a diverse society. Beyond employing the market approach to diversity, the organization must recognize that simply gaining entree into diverse cultures is not enough. A diverse workforce should enhance an organization's understanding, insight, and respect so that it can produce products that best meet its needs.

The third and, in some ways, the most mature approach is the quality or competence approach to diversity. That approach is based on the belief that diversity is a crucial strategy to success. It values diversity in its own right. It recognizes that in order to ensure the development of a quality product or competent strategy, the process must have diverse input. When that happens, the end result is a better, higher quality, and more fully articulated final product.

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Surgeon General's Column

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Why Is Diversity Important?

Diversity is important because it brings out the best in all of us. It calls for respect and dignity, kindness and peace, tolerance and love. It is important also because it challenges us to reach beyond our own capacity and abilities. It calls for understanding and listening beyond the familiar and the easy. It thrives on collaboration, teamwork, dialogue, and creativity.

That is really the message now and for the future. While our differences are what stand out most, and while we naturally tend to focus on what makes us distinct, we share a lot more in common with one another than we have in differences.

The conference took place in the Great Hall of the Hubert H. Humphrey building, and participants came from all across the country. While all of the speakers and participants may have scattered back to their various offices, the strong sentiment that supports diversity throughout the Department remains intact. In fact, in the lobby of the building is an 8-foot reminder of that conference in the form of a mural. On it are the handwritten ideas, beliefs, and sentiments of the participants of the Diversity Conference. They range from the very passionate: "Stop discrimination by whatever means necessary" to the very compassionate: "Our greatest strength is our diversity." But the comment that best sums up diversity was pasted on the mural and is attributed to the students of the Lower Elementary Bowie Montessori Children's Center, which simply says: "It's love and respect and lots of laughter and understanding."

I am excited about the work that was started by the Diversity Conference and I look forward to the richness that will flourish in the Department and throughout the Corps as a result.

ADM David Satcher
Assistant Secretary for Health
and Surgeon General

Commissioned Officer Roster and Promotion Seniority Pamphlet on DCP Web Site

Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual Pamphlet No. 1, "Commissioned Officer Roster and Promotion Seniority," (also known as the "Blue Book") dated October 1, 1999, is on the Division of Commissioned Personnel's (DCP) operational web site - <http://dcp.psc.gov>

Once on the web site, you can access the Blue Book through 'Officer and Liaison Activities'. Since this pamphlet contains personal information concerning an officer's career status, it must be maintained and stored in such a way as to prevent disclosure to unauthorized persons. Therefore, authorized persons are required to use the user ID password DCP provided to them to access the pamphlet on the DCP web site. If you do not know your access information, contact the DCP Help desk at 301-594-0961.

This edition and all future editions of the Blue Book will only be available in electronic form on DCP's web site; DCP will no longer print and distribute on paper media.

USUHS to Sponsor a CME Course

The Department of Family Medicine of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) is sponsoring a Continuing Medical Education (CME) course specifically designed to provide primary care medical officers with an excellent update on a wide variety of topics.

"The IXth Annual Capital Conference—A Family Practice Board Review Course" (CME 37.5 hours) is scheduled for June 5-9, 2000, at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. Contact Ms. Cynthia Vahle at phone 301-295-3634, or e-mail at cvahle@usuhs.mil, or visit the USUHS web site at www.usuhs.mil/fap/fap.html for more information.

Coming Soon—Automated Commissioned Officer Leave Tracking System

The Division of Commissioned Personnel (DCP) is developing an automated Commissioned Officer Leave Tracking System (COLTS). Annual leave is maintained currently by manually entering leave taken and leave accrued on form PHS-31, "Officers' Leave Record." This initiative is in response to a need identified by auditors to improve leave accountability.

While many details remain to be worked out, planning and system analysis is already underway. The immediate goal is to automate the maintenance of the form PHS-31. Later enhancements will add the ability to request annual leave and have it approved online as well as the tracking of additional types of leave.

The primary means of accessing COLTS will be through the Internet. Leave maintenance clerks will be able to log into a web site and enter leave taken. The system will handle leave accrual automatically and provide up-to-the-minute leave balances on demand. An officer will be able to log in and view his or her leave records on demand, thus doing away with the need for the annual form PHS-3842, "Report of Commissioned Officer Annual Leave." Form PHS-3842 is the card that leave maintenance clerks are supposed to give to officers each September 30th. However, any officer without access to the Internet can still request information about his or her leave record from the leave maintenance clerk.

COLTS will be phased in over a period of several months, bringing up one or a few Operating Divisions (OPDIVs) at a time. One challenge in starting up the system will be collecting the information needed to prime the database.

Lists of leave maintenance clerks and initial leave balances will have to be collected for all officers on duty. The initial leave balance will be the amount of leave an officer has as of a specified date—the date will vary depending on when the officer's OPDIV is being brought online. DCP is working with the OPDIV Commissioned Corps Liaisons to create a method to collect this information.

Commissioned Corps Readiness Force

CPR Courses to be Offered at COA Meeting

The Commissioned Corps Readiness Force (CCRF) will be offering two cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) classes in Scottsdale, Arizona, at the upcoming 2000 Public Health Professional Conference sponsored by the Commissioned Officers Association (COA). Both initial CPR training and CPR training updates will be offered on Wednesday, June 7, at the Doubletree Paradise Valley Resort. All officers interested in the training update will need to have a current CPR card in their possession. *Note:* Current CPR status is a requirement for deploying for all officers.

Space and materials are limited, so advance registration is required. If you are interested in participating in one of these classes, please complete the online form located in the 'Events' section of the CCRF web site—<http://oep.osophs.dhhs.gov/ccrf>. The online form should be completed as soon as possible, but no later than **May 12, 2000**.

CCRF Web Site

Please remember that CCRF members are responsible for keeping their data current. This is particularly important for CPR training. Each CCRF member must make certain that the database accurately reflects a current status for CPR training. Currency in CPR is a mandatory requirement for assignment to a ready roster.

All CCRF members should remember to visit the CCRF web site frequently to check for news and to update any changes to personal information—<http://oep.osophs.dhhs.gov/ccrf>. It is particularly important to update any changes in address or phone number, passport information, and CPR certification.

Any commissioned officer interested in applying for membership in CCRF may apply online at the CCRF web site. Simply click on 'Apply' and follow the online instructions.

All members should also subscribe to the CCRF Listserv in order to receive the most up-to-date CCRF news messages via e-mail. To do so, click on 'Listserv' from the CCRF Home Page. The CCRF Command Staff may be reached by e-mail at—ccrf@osophs.dhhs.gov

Commissioned Officer Training Academy

"Basic Officer Training Course" to be Held at COA Annual Meeting

The Division of Commissioned Personnel (DCP) is offering a "Basic Officer Training Course (BOTC)" to be held in conjunction with the 2000 Public Health Professional Conference sponsored by the Commissioned Officers Association (COA). The BOTC is a 2-day course and is scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, June 5 and 6, at the Doubletree Paradise Valley Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona.

This BOTC includes information on the following subjects: awards, career development, Commissioned Officers' Effectiveness Report, courtesies, customs, grooming, inactivation, leave, personnel actions, malpractice, health care, outside work activity, pay and allowances, promotion process, retirement, standards of conduct, termination, temporary duty travel, saluting, Public Health Service (PHS) uniforms, and Uniformed Services benefits.

There is no charge for the course and all officers are invited, but newly commissioned officers are strongly encouraged to attend. Officers do not have to be attending the Conference to attend the BOTC. Registration prior to May 20 is helpful to DCP, but it is not required—your attendance is the important element. To register for the June 5 and 6 BOTC, please e-mail your request along with your name, grade, PHS serial number, and Operating Division to CAPT Frank J. Behan at fbehan@psc.gov CAPT Behan can also be reached at 301-594-3397 (or toll-free 1-877-INFO DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, dial 43397) or fax number 1-888-219-7751.

Confirmation will be returned with an attached draft agenda. Officers must be in uniform and most officers will be in Service Dress Blue, Summer White, or Summer Blue. If you are attending the Conference, please note that COA has specified the uniforms to be worn at the Conference. Registration for the Conference is accomplished through COA.

As they are scheduled, additional BOTCs and Supervisors/Administrators Training Courses will be announced under "Training Opportunities" on DCP's web site—<http://dcp.psc.gov>

SURVIVOR BENEFITS

DCP Distributes "Information on Commissioned Officer Survivor Benefits" Pamphlet

The following Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual (CCPM) pamphlet has been printed and distributed:

CCPM Pamphlet No. 63, "Information on Commissioned Officer Survivor Benefits," dated March 2000.

This pamphlet was mailed to all active duty and retired officers. Reference copies were sent to officers' administrative offices and to the Operating Division/Program Commissioned Corps Liaisons. This pamphlet is also available on The Division of Commissioned Personnel's operational web site—<http://dcp/psc.gov>—under 'Publications/Policies.'

Officers may wish to share this pamphlet with their next of kin or a close personal friend and then keep this pamphlet with their wills and other important papers.

TRICARE Help Via E-Mail

TRICARE help via e-mail is now offered at no cost by the U.S. Army. The service is designed to provide beneficiaries with quick answers to TRICARE questions.

If you are connected to the Internet, you can access this free service at the following address—

TRICARE_help@amedd.army.mil

You will receive an initial response within one business day letting you know the expert that has been assigned to answer your question. In some cases, issues can be resolved in a day. With more difficult issues, you can expect at least a preliminary response in a week.

PERSONNEL SERVICES BRANCH

Update: Officers' Official Personnel Folders - Conversion to Optical Disk Storage

2000 Promotion Year and Optical Disk Storage

The Division of Commissioned Personnel (DCP) is pleased to announce that the Official Personnel Folders (OPFs) of all officers who are promotion-eligible for the 2000 Promotion Year cycle have been converted from paper format to Optical Disk Storage. This has facilitated the Electronic Promotion Process System (EPPS). All promotion board members are now reviewing officers' OPFs using the electronic medium exclusively.

Viewing OPFs on the DCP Web Site

DCP presently has more than 3,000 OPFs scanned, indexed, and on DCP's operational web site. This represents more than 55 percent of the total OPFs, and approximately 300 additional OPFs are being converted each month.

Officers whose OPFs have already been converted may view/review their OPFs at their desk top computers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through DCP's web site. The process to access OPFs through DCP's web site is as follows:

- (1) DCP's web site - <http://dcp.psc.gov>
- (2) 'Officer & Liaison Activities'
- (3) Logon ID
- (4) Password

Note: The Logon ID and Password information can be found printed on your June 1999 pay stub. If officers have any problem with their password, they should call the Help Desk at 301-594-0961.

Although promotion-eligible officers have not been announced for the 2001 Promotion Year, DCP has done a preliminary analysis and projected who will be eligible for promotion. These records have already been scanned and indexed and are available on the DCP web site.

Submitting Information for Electronic OPFs

After June 1, 2000, those officers whose OPFs are on the DCP web site should submit information by fax. The submitted documents will be scanned automatically and placed into the officers' electronic OPFs. Officers are cautioned not

to mail hard copies of previously faxed documents as this will result in duplication.

The scanning software only accepts 8½" x 11" regular weight writing paper and very clean photocopies (photocopies with various shades of contrasts cannot be scanned). Please refrain from using a 'highlighter' marker, since the highlighted sections are scanned as dark lines and cannot be read.

The following fax numbers must be used to fax material for inclusion into your electronic OPF - 301-480-1436 (or) 301-480-1407. On the lower left corner of all submitted sheets, include your name, Public Health Service (PHS) serial number, and category. *Important:* Please check the web site before submitting information to be certain that you are not submitting duplicates.

Rules Governing Submission of Electronic Information

- (1) Only the most current curriculum vitae (CV) will be viewable. Since individual pages cannot be corrected, officers must submit an entire CV and include a summary sheet. The summary sheet should not be submitted as a separate document; it must be the first page of the CV.
- (2) As always, photocopies of License/Registration/Certification must be sent directly to the following address: Division of Commissioned Personnel ATTN: Licensure Technician/ODB 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 4A-18 Rockville, MD 20857-0001
- (3) To facilitate indexing, Continuing Education (CE) documents and PHS support documents will be indexed by year regardless of the date of the actual event. When submitting a CE summary sheet for the year, place the summary sheet as the first sheet of the certificates of completion for the corresponding year. Please note that DCP will not accept publications, program agendas, or photos. Also, do not submit any hard copies that are generated

by DCP, e.g., personnel orders, awards authorization, or award certificates. These DCP-generated items are automatically scanned into your OPF by DCP.

- (4) For consistency and integrity of the system, no changes will be made during the current promotion cycle to the current system of converting OPFs. However, present promotion board members are identifying areas for possible improvement to the EPPS for the 2001 Promotion Year cycle.

If you have any questions, please phone the Personnel Services Branch, DCP, by calling 301-594-3108 or toll-free at 1-877-INFO DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, dial 43108.

Absentee Voting Information Online

Information on absentee voting is now available through the Internet. The Federal Voting Assistance Program's web site—www.fvap.ncr.gov—provides voting-related information and resources, including the complete *Voting Assistance Guide* and voting news releases for members of the Uniformed Services who are eligible to vote absentee.

Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Corps officers can obtain Standard Form 76, "Registration and Absentee Ballot Request—Federal Post Card Application," from their local PHS ID card issuing office or by contacting the Personnel Services Branch, Division of Commissioned Personnel, at 301-594-3384 (or toll-free at 1-877-INFO-DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, dial 43384).

RETIREMENT SEMINAR

Retirement Seminar to be Held at COA Annual Meeting

The Division of Commissioned Personnel will offer a Public Health Service Retirement Seminar at the 2000 Public Health Professional Conference sponsored by the Commissioned Officers Association to be held this year in Scottsdale, Arizona. The Retirement Seminar is scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, June 6 and 7, and will be held at the Doubletree Paradise Valley Resort.

This seminar is open to all officers no matter how many years of service. Registration for the seminar must be received by **April 15, 2000**. Please request that a blank retirement seminar registration form be faxed to you by using the Faxback feature of *CorpsLine*. You can reach *CorpsLine* at 301-443-6843. Listen to the menu and choose the second option, "To retrieve documents through Faxback," and request document number **6536**. After completing the form, follow the instructions on the form and submit it to the Retirement Seminar Coordinator in DCP. If you have additional questions, the DCP Retirement Seminar Coordinator can be reached at 301-594-3472 (or toll-free at 1-877-INFO-DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, dial 43472).

Update Your Contact Information on the DCP Web Site

Whenever your home address, telephone number(s), fax number, or e-mail address changes, please remember to update your contact information on DCP's web site—<http://dcp.psc.gov>

If you do not know your access information, contact the DCP Help Desk at 301-594-0961.

Call for Nominations for Veterinary PAC Membership

The Veterinary Professional Advisory Committee (VetPAC) is seeking motivated commissioned corps and civil service veterinarians who are interested in serving as members on this categorical panel. VetPAC membership is open to all veterinarians who are employed in the Department's Operating Divisions (OPDIVs) as well as Corps officers in the veterinary category working in any of the major programs that employ Public Health Service Commissioned Corps officers.

The mission of the VetPAC is to provide advice and consultation to the Surgeon General on the application of veterinary medical science for the protection and advancement of the health of the Nation. Additionally, the body seeks to represent the activities and interests of all Department veterinarians. The VetPAC currently meets quarterly by tele/videoconference, and travel is not required for membership. Regular attendance at the quarterly meetings is expected throughout the term of membership which is currently 2 years, and VetPAC members are expected to actively participate in the activities of at least one subcommittee during the term of service.

Several positions will be available as of January 1, 2001. The VetPAC will recommend successful candidates to the Surgeon General for appointment, with the concurrence of line supervisors and OPDIV representatives.

Corps officers or civil service veterinarians who are interested are encouraged to self-nominate. Individuals should submit a curriculum vitae that includes the name and phone number of their immediate supervisor along with a one-page cover letter describing their interest. This document should be sent as a Word® or WordPerfect® attachment to an e-mail message by **May 15, 2000**, to:

CDR Axel Wolff
Chair, USPHS Veterinary Professional
Advisory Committee
Phone: 301-594-2061
E-mail: WolffA@od.nih.gov

Call for Nominations for AI/ANCOAC Membership

The American Indian Alaska Native Commissioned Officer's Advisory Committee (AI/ANCOAC) is seeking commissioned corps and civil service health professionals who are interested in serving on this national committee. The committee is composed of health professionals who are employed in the Department of Health and Human Services' Operating Divisions (OPDIVs) or in any of the major programs that employ commissioned corps officers. The mission of the committee is to provide advice and consultation about American Indian and Alaska Native issues to the Surgeon General and the Minority Officer Liaison Council. The AI/ANCOAC members meet monthly via teleconference. Travel is not required for this committee.

Each year at this time nominations are sought, the majority being self-nominations by commissioned officers or civil servants interested in serving on the committee.

If you would like to be considered for appointment to the committee, please request that a blank self-nomination form be faxed to you by using the Faxback feature of *CorpsLine*. You can reach *CorpsLine* at 301-443-6843. Listen to the menu and choose the second option, "To retrieve documents through Faxback," and request document number **6524**. Send the completed form by **July 1, 2000**, to:

CDR Tammy L. Brown
AI/ANCOAC Membership
ANC-DIA
4315 Diplomacy Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone: 907-729-1128
Fax: 907-729-1129
E-mail: tlbrown@anmc.org

Vacancy Announcements

The following vacancies are provided as representative of opportunities currently available to Public Health Service Commissioned Corps officers. If you have questions pertaining to the announcements listed below, please call the contact listed.

Any Operating Division/Program wishing to list a vacancy in this column should send a written request to: Division of Commissioned Personnel, ATTN: Vacancy Announcements Project Officer/ODB, Room 4A-18, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857-0001—or phone: 301-594-3458 or 301-594-3360 (toll-free at 1-877-INFO-DCP, listen to the prompts, select option #1, dial 43360) or Fax: 301-443-7069.

<i>Category/OPDIV</i>	<i>Description of Position</i>
MEDICAL <i>AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY—Rockville, MD</i>	<p>Medical Officer Contact: Ms. Kate Rickard 301-594-2431 or 2408 Grades: O-5/O-6</p> <p>The Center for Practice and Technology Assessment (CPTA) has a vacancy for a physician specializing in either family medicine or pediatrics. CPTA conducts and supports systemic assessments of clinical practice and health care technologies as well as methodological and implementation research. For more information, visit the Agency's web site – <i>www.ahrq.gov</i></p>
HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION—San Pedro, CA	<p>Clinical Director Contact: CDR Gilbert P. Rose 1-877-353-9834 Grade: O-6</p> <p>Provides direct clinical services to Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) detainees at an INS Processing Center. Experience in a primary care setting is required. Correctional experience and Spanish language proficiency is desirable, but not required. Please fax curriculum vitae and cover letter to 202-514-0095.</p>
NURSE <i>NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH—Bethesda, MD</i>	<p>Clinical Nurse Contact: Ms. Rosie Smith 1-800-732-5985 Grades: O-2/O-3</p> <p>Provides nursing care to patients in a 314-bed hospital solely dedicated to biomedical research. Vacancies exist for staff nurses with experience in critical care, oncology, mental health, organ and bone marrow transplant, medicine/surgery, pediatrics, cardiac catheterization lab, telemetry/cardiovascular, and neurology/neurosurgery.</p>
HEALTH SERVICES <i>HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION—Washington, DC</i>	<p>Executive Assistant to the Division Director Contact: CDR Gilbert Rose 1-877-353-9834 Grade: O-4</p> <p>This position is with the Division of Immigration Health Services. Join an exciting, progressive, integrated health care system providing services to international refugees and individuals under the jurisdiction of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Duties will include public affairs, special projects, and coordination of information with other government agencies. Strong written and oral communication skills are necessary. A master of public health degree or equivalent is required.</p>

Retirements - March

<i>Title/Name</i>	<i>OPDIV/Program</i>
MEDICAL	
<i>REAR ADMIRAL (UPPER)</i>	
Michael M. Gottesman	NIH
<i>CAPTAIN</i>	
Harold W. Schneider, Jr.	IHS
Melvin W. Williams	SAMHSA
Lawrence M. Friedman	NIH
John H. Klippel	NIH
Edward G. Lakatta	NIH
Forrest F. Weight, Jr.	NIH
John N. Weinstein	NIH
DENTAL	
<i>COMMANDER</i>	
Eric S. Touet	BOP
NURSE	
<i>CAPTAIN</i>	
Patrice A. Robins	HRSA
<i>COMMANDER</i>	
Barbara A. Lutz	HCFA
Penny M. Hlavna	IHS
<i>LIEUTENANT COMMANDER</i>	
Scott W. Pederstuen	HRSA
ENGINEER	
<i>CAPTAIN</i>	
Raymond J. Suarez	IHS
<i>COMMANDER</i>	
Steven K. Body	EPA
SCIENTIST	
<i>CAPTAIN</i>	
Thomas C. Curran	EPA
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	
<i>CAPTAIN</i>	
Ralph J. Touch, Jr.	ATSDR
PHARMACY	
<i>CAPTAIN</i>	
Robert C. Adams	IHS
HEALTH SERVICES	
<i>CAPTAIN</i>	
Dennis L. McMahan	HRSA

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<http://dcp.psc.gov>

DCP Toll-Free Phone Number—
1-877-INFO DCP
(1-877-463-6327)

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listserv@list.psc.dhhs.gov

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