



Connie Beck, Director
Social Services | Public Health | Mental Health

news release

May 3, 2017

New Public Health Director Named



Long-time Department of Health & Human Services employee Michele Stephens has been named the department's director of the Public Health Branch, replacing Susan Buckley who retired in January.

Stephens joined DHHS in 2006 as a social worker, and has served as both a supervisor and manager in the department's Child Welfare Services Division. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Child Development and a Master's in Social Work, both from Humboldt State University.

The new branch director's priorities include working to further align Public Health activities with department- and community-wide efforts, and addressing the county's high mortality rates associated with alcohol and drug abuse.

Stephens said she's additionally interested in community efforts to reduce the impacts of pre- and postnatal substance use, and better integrating services for children and families.

DHHS Director Connie Beck described Stephens as a highly respected manager within the department who has forged strong relationships with community partners as well. "Michele has exceptional leadership qualities that will serve both the department and the county well."

Stephens is responsible for Environmental Health; Maternal, Child & Adolescent Health programs including the WIC nutrition program; the Public Health Clinic;

Public Health Nursing; a state-of-the-art laboratory; and a variety of grant-funded programs focused around improving the health of our communities.

Her promotion was effective March 12.

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