

Dr. Alexander-Scott Named Director of the Department of Health



Dr. Nicole Alexander-Scott with Governor Gina Raimondo

PROVIDENCE – Today, **DR. NICOLE ALEXANDER-SCOTT** begins in her new role as Director of the Department of Health, succeeding Dr. Michael Fine, who announced his resignation last month.

"Dr. Alexander-Scott brings tremendous experience from her work at Rhode Island Hospital, the Department of Health, and Brown University," said Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services Elizabeth Roberts. "She was a tremendous asset to our state during the recent meningitis outbreak at Providence College, and will be a great addition to our team as we work to provide all Rhode Islanders with access to the information and care they need to be healthy."

Dr. Alexander-Scott is board certified in pediatrics, internal medicine, pediatric infectious diseases, and adult infectious diseases. She is an assistant professor of pediatrics and medicine at the Alpert Medical School, serving in the Divisions of Pediatric and Adult Infectious Diseases at the affiliated hospitals in Rhode Island. She also serves as a consultant medical director for the Office of HIV/AIDS, Viral

Hepatitis, STDs, and TB at the Rhode Island Department of Health in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Epidemiology.

"I've had the opportunity to work with Dr. Alexander-Scott, and I believe she is the best of the best," said Dr. Fine. "The Governor has made an excellent choice for our state, and I look forward to working closely with Dr. Alexander-Scott over the coming weeks to ensure a smooth transition."

"It is a privilege to have this opportunity to work with so many talented health care and public health professionals to strengthen our care system across the state," said Dr. Alexander-Scott. "My passion is advancing public health across all ages, economic backgrounds and communities. I am committed to helping to ensure all Rhode Islanders receive the kind of care they deserve."

She received her bachelor of science degree from Cornell University and her medical degree from SUNY Upstate Medical University at Syracuse. She also holds a master of public health degree from Brown University. ♦

Rhode Island Hospital Offers First Fellowship in Addiction Medicine in RI

PROVIDENCE – Rhode Island Hospital has established a fellowship program in addiction medicine, the first of its kind in the state. Funded in part by a grant from CleanSlate Addiction Treatment Centers of Massachusetts, the new fellowship is one of the ways the hospital is responding to the public health crisis posed by addiction in Rhode Island and southern New England.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Rhode Island is perched at the top of the list for illicit drug use and has the third highest rate of alcohol poisoning deaths in the nation. Opioid abuse is rampant, including not just heroin but prescription opioids such as Vicodin, Percocet, methadone, and oxycodone. Heroin is the most commonly cited drug among primary drug treatment admissions in the state. Tobacco addiction is also on the list of the most difficult substances to quit, and 20 percent of Rhode Island's adult population smoke cigarettes.

"Training doctors in addiction medicine serves not only to improve public health, but also to advance the knowledge

and skill of our own physicians in addressing substance use problems," said **PETER D. FRIEDMANN, MD, MPH, FASAM**, FACP, director of the new fellowship based in the division of general internal medicine at Rhode Island Hospital.

The physician fellows will work with physicians certified in addiction medicine and addiction psychiatry as well as those trained in internal medicine, family medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics and emergency medicine. The fellows will work with varied populations, including but not limited to youth, veterans, patients with HIV, health professionals and those within the criminal justice system.

"We're actively recruiting candidates from all specialties who will help us make evidence-based addiction prevention and treatment more available to those who need it," said Dr. Friedmann.

Rhode Island Hospital was one of four new fellowship programs accredited recently by the American Board of Addiction Medicine Foundation (ABAM). In all, ABAM has accredited 27 addiction medicine training programs in the U.S. ♦