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Gov. Shumlin Announces Leadership Changes at DVHA
*Commissioner Mark Larson leaving DVHA; Led Department through
Implementation of Affordable Care Act*

MONTPELIER – Gov. Peter Shumlin today announced the resignation of Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) Commissioner Mark Larson, who will be stepping down in March after helping transition his deputy Lori Collins to Interim Commissioner. A search for a permanent replacement is underway.

“Mark has worked as hard as anyone on my team over the last four years,” said Gov. Shumlin. “Mark led the Department through some challenging times, but no one cared more or tried harder to overcome those challenges so Vermonters could access affordable health care than Mark. Thanks to the work of Mark and others, tens of thousands more Vermonters are now insured. I appreciate his service and understand his desire to take some time to step back and explore new opportunities.”

“The last three years have involved a historic transition in health care for Vermont and our country, and has not been without its challenges. I am proud of the fact that in Vermont we have reduced by half the number of uninsured Vermonters and are on track to significantly reform how Medicaid pay providers for health services,” said Larson. “I am proud to have been part of this tremendous effort. As the Department prepares to engage its next phase of work, it is time for me to move on to new opportunities. I look forward to stepping back to the role of citizen and witnessing the continued progress toward coverage for all Vermonters and more rational ways to pay for health services.”

During the time that Larson has been Commissioner of DVHA, the Department has implemented the expansion of Medicaid services provided for by the Affordable Care Act, resulting in thousands of Vermonters obtaining new coverage through Medicaid. The Department also was responsible for the development of the State’s insurance marketplace, Vermont Health Connect. With Commissioner Larson’s leadership, DVHA has also continued the rollout of the Blueprint for Health so that most Vermonters now receive primary care from an enrolled provider, and established a shared savings program aimed at expanding DVHA’s outcome purchasing of health services based on outcomes not volume.

Commissioner Larson expressed his appreciation for the staff of DVHA and the many community partners who work with the Department to support Vermonters. In particular he thanked the state employees he's worked with who have demonstrated a tireless dedication to serving Vermonters well.

To assure continuity of management of critical projects during the leadership transitions at the Agency of Human Services and Department of Vermont Health Access, Department of Health Commissioner Harry Chen has agreed to continue to serve as Chair of the Health and Human Services Enterprise Program Executive Steering Committee. In this capacity, Dr. Chen will still provide daily executive oversight of the Vermont Health Connect, Integrated Eligibility, and Medicaid Management Information Systems projects and report to AHS Secretary Hal Cohen.

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