

Jessica Hardy to direct Office of Women's Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jessica Hardy
(334) 206-5665
jhardy@adph.state.al.us

Jessica Thomas Hardy of Selma has been named to direct the newly created Office of Women's Health within the Alabama Department of Public Health. The Alabama Legislature recently passed Act 2002-141 which created the office to be an advocate for women's health issues.

The purposes of the office as described in the legislation are as follows:

- To educate the public and be an advocate for women's health by establishing appropriate forums to educate the public regarding women's health, with an emphasis on preventive health and healthy lifestyles.
- To assist the state health officer in identifying, coordinating and establishing priorities for programs, services and resources the state should provide for women's health issues and concerns.
- To serve as a clearinghouse and resource for information regarding women's health data, services, and programs that address women's health issues.
- To provide an annual report on the status of women's health and activities of the office to the Governor and the Legislature.

"I am excited and challenged with this opportunity to advocate for women's health," Ms. Hardy said. "I am looking forward to this office helping to raise public awareness about women's health issues."

The new office is housed in Montgomery in the Office of Professional and Support Services, which serves as an administrative arm of the department. Ms. Hardy holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from Auburn University at Montgomery and a master's degree in public health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Ms. Hardy brings a wealth of public health experience to her new position. Formerly she served as assistant state nursing director for the Alabama Department of Public Health, and held several leadership positions in the department's Bureau of Health Provider Standards from 1990 to 2000.

Her additional health care experience includes serving as the director of nursing at Perry County Hospital and Nursing Home in Marion and as the assistant operating room manager at Vaughan Regional Medical Center in Selma.

The law provides for an advisory committee for the office. This Steering Committee will consist of three physicians appointed by the Medical Association of the State of Alabama; three nurses appointed by the Alabama State Nurses Association; three pharmacists appointed by the Alabama Pharmaceutical Association; three employers appointed by the Business Council of Alabama; three consumers, one appointed by the Governor, one appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and one by the Speaker of the House; three members appointed by the Alabama Hospital Association; and three registered dietitians appointed by the Alabama Dietetic Association.

8/12/02