State of New Jersey
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Governor Christie Names Christopher Rinn Acting Health Commissioner

Praises Accomplishments of Departing Commissioner Bennett

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Trenton, NJ – Governor Chris Christie today thanked New Jersey Health Commissioner Cathleen D. Bennett for her public health and health care accomplishments, and appointed Assistant Commissioner Christopher Rinn as Acting Commissioner.

"During Commissioner Bennett's tenure, the Department achieved public health accreditation, opened adoption records dating back to the 1940s, coordinated health policies across eight Departments through the Population Health Action Team, funded pediatric autism medical homes, and successfully integrated the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) into the agency from the Department of Human Services," Governor Christie said. "We will miss her expertise and wish her well as she moves on to become President and CEO of the New Jersey Hospital Association."

The Department's mission is improving health through leadership and innovation. The Department's branches – Public Health Services, Health Systems, Integrated Health, the Office of Population Health, and the Office of Policy and Strategic Planning– work collaboratively toward that goal.

Christopher Rinn, who joined the Department in 2010 as Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Public Health Infrastructure, Laboratories, and Emergency Preparedness (PHILEP), will become Acting Commissioner effective tomorrow.

"I'm honored to be appointed Acting Health Commissioner, and I look forward to continuing the progress the Department has made in key public health priorities," said Rinn.

Rinn has more than 28 years of experience in public health, healthcare, and emergency services. He coordinated the Department's emergency response to Superstorm Sandy, Ebola, Super Bowl XLVIII, and Pope Francis' visit to the area. He managed a $101 million budget, including the Office of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), which oversees more than 30,000 EMS providers; the EMS Task Force; the Office of Local Public Health; the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Operations; and the Public Health and Environmental Laboratories, which conduct 5 million tests a year and include a bioterrorism lab.

A graduate of Columbia University with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Science, Rinn completed the Harvard Kennedy School's National Preparedness Leadership Initiative.

Prior to joining the Department, Rinn served as Jersey City Medical Center's executive director of emergency medical services and governmental affairs, and served as an EMT/Paramedic for six years. He responded to the 1993 and 2001 bombing attacks on the World Trade Center and worked with the New York City Fire Department to coordinate New Jersey EMS resources.

Rinn, his wife, and two children reside in Fair Haven.