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Committee Formed, Search Begun for New Health Department Director

PITTSBURGH – The Board of Health has formed a search committee to lead the work to hire a new director for the Allegheny County Health Department. Co-chaired by Board of Health member Edith Shapira, M.D. and Heinz Endowments President Grant Oliphant, the nine-member committee will work with Krauthamer & Associates, Inc., a national executive search firm to identify appropriate candidates.

“The Allegheny County Health Department has made great strides under Dr. Hacker’s leadership. We achieved national accreditation, deepened staff expertise, pursued more robust enforcement in multiple areas, and developed an ambitious strategic plan,” said Shapira. “We are optimistic that we can recruit a new leader who will build on these accomplishments and ultimately further improve the health of the county.”

In addition to Dr. Shapira and Mr. Oliphant, the search committee includes three other Board of Health members and four community members: Lee Harrison, M.D., Donald Burke, M.D., Joylette Portlock, Ph.D., Marc Cherna, Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis, Yvonne Cook, A. Everette James, III, JD, MBA. The committee is seeking a driven, highly competitive professional eager to play a key role and have a large impact within a dynamic community. Their projected timeline to selection of a candidate is six months.

“I'm hopeful that this effort is as successful as it was the first time in bringing us Dr. Hacker. The model created last time around by Dr. Shapira has served as a model for us in other searches, including the Airport Authority and Port Authority,” said County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. “Because of Karen’s efforts, the work of the Health Department has been elevated across all of its divisions, giving the department a reputation that should attract significant, dynamic candidates.”

During the transition period, Ronald A. Sugar, Esq., Deputy Director of Administration, will serve as interim director of the Health Department. Ron has worked for the Health Department since 2014 and is responsible for its day to day operations. His selection as the interim director will ensure the continued stability and effectiveness of the department during this process. His appointment has been approved by the state Department of Health. The health clinics will operate under the direction of Kristen J. Mertz, M.D., Medical Epidemiologist of the Health Department. Dr. Mertz earned her medical degree from Yale University School of Medicine and her M.P.H. from Columbia University School of Public Health. She has also worked for the department since 2014.

The position description for the director, as well as information regarding the application process, can be found online at: https://www.alleghenycounty.us/careers/index.aspx.

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