

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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Mayor Gray Names Experienced Health Official Dr. Joxel García to Lead Department of Health

Consultant is Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Health and Medical School Dean

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) — Today, Mayor Vincent C. Gray named health-care consultant and former public-health official Joxel García to lead the District's Department of Health (DOH). Dr. García replaces Dr. Saul Levin, who led the agency on an interim basis after former DOH Director Dr. Mohammed Akhter took a leave of absence to serve on the Executive Board of the District's new Health Benefit Exchange Authority. Dr. Levin recently left DOH to become the American Psychiatric Association's new CEO and Medical Director.

"Dr. García has extensive experience in multiple aspects of our health system, including service at the state, federal and international levels," Mayor Gray said. ***"In addition, his familiarity with our city and our region and his extensive résumé working in multicultural settings means he will be a natural fit to help move the District's public-health efforts forward."***

Dr. García is currently a founding partner in two health-care-consulting firms, Faunus Global and Aegis Health Security. Previously, he was President and Dean of Medicine at the Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

Prior to that, he was Assistant Secretary of Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and a four-star Admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service. Dr. García has also served as a U.S. representative to the World Health Organization (WHO), Deputy Director of the WHO's Pan American Health Organization, Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Health and an obstetrician in hospitals and clinics in Connecticut.

Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services BB Otero said Dr. García's experience and expertise made his appointment a win for the District. "I'm delighted to have someone with his extensive background and knowledge join our team and ensure continuity as we move forward on important health initiatives," she said.

The Puerto Rico native earned his medical doctorate from the Ponce School of Medicine and his bachelor's degree from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez. Dr. García also earned an MBA from the University of Hartford in Connecticut.

He is scheduled to begin work at DOH on August 1. Until Dr. Garcia begins work, DOH Chief Operating Officer Shaun M. Snyder will serve as the agency's Interim Director.

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