



Health Sciences Center

HEALTH CARE SERVICES DIVISION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BATON ROUGE - Donald R. Smithburg, formerly President and Chief Executive Officer of the University Medical Center in Dallas, Texas, has been named to the position of Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer of the LSU Health Sciences Center's Health Care Services Division (HCSA) headquartered in Baton Rouge. The HCSA is LSU's operational and managerial authority for their eight public hospitals.

The announcement of Smithburg's appointment was made today by John Rock, M.D., Chancellor of the Health Sciences Center. Rock stated that the appointment follows an intense search effort by a selection committee which considered over fifty highly qualified candidates. "We are absolutely delighted to have acquired a professional healthcare executive with Donald Smithburg's experience," Rock stated. "His years in hospital management, first at Truman Health System in Kansas City, then at University Medical Center in Dallas, prove him to be an extremely able and innovative executive. We are certain he will be an excellent leader for our public hospitals," the Chancellor added.

Mary Ella Sanders, M.D., Vice-Chancellor of the Health Sciences Center, headed the search committee. She describes the appointee as "a highly qualified individual with extensive experience in both the public and private sector. He brings the strengths of a strong communicator with the ability to listen and to see opportunities within challenging situations," she stated.

Smithburg is a graduate of the Colorado College in Colorado Springs with a degree in anthropology. He attained a Masters in Public Administration from the University of New Mexico's Albuquerque campus in 1985 and was named a Management fellow in 1992 and a Senior Policy Fellow in 1995 by the New York University/National Public Health & Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. His initial entry into executive healthcare status came in 1985 serving as Chief Administrative Officer at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine. He would rise in the administrative ranks of the Truman Health System, Kansas City's adult teaching hospitals, to the position of Deputy Executive Director before assuming the role of President and CEO in the Dallas-based hospitals which serve as the key teaching hospitals for the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Smithburg will begin his duties at the HCSA August 30.

"It will be my privilege to serve LSU and the people of Louisiana in this most challenging position," Smithburg stated. "Safety Net institutions and academic medical centers such as Louisiana's unique and historic Charity system have been and must continue to be critical to the health and well being of the uninsured and needy," he added.

Smithburg succeeds James Brexler in the Division's leadership role. Brexler resigned to accept a position with a Tennessee-based healthcare system. Robert Plaisance has served as interim CEO. "We are deeply indebted to Bob Plaisance for bringing superb management skills to the Division during this period," Rock stated. Plaisance will return to his former role as a Financial Executive in the LSU Systems Office, according to Rock, and will also continue on with the HCSD in an executive management position.

The LSU Public Hospitals include both Charity and University Hospitals in New Orleans, Leonard J. Chabert Memorial in Houma, University Medical Center in Lafayette, W. O. Moss Regional in Lake Charles, Huey P. Long Hospital in Alexandria, Earl K. Long Medical Center in Baton Rouge, the Bogalusa Medical Center and Lallie Kemp Medical Center, Independence.

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