



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**CITY COUNCIL APPROVES DR. ALLISON ARWADY AS COMMISSIONER OF
CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

CHICAGO – The Chicago City Council today voted to confirm Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot's nomination of Dr. Allison Arwady to serve as Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH). Dr. Arwady has led the department as Acting Commissioner since June 2019, and has served at CDPH since 2015.

"Dr. Arwady is a dedicated and innovative leader in public health," said Mayor Lightfoot. "As a physician and public servant, Dr. Arwady has served the residents of our city by pushing the health department to be on the forefront of issues ranging from regulating tobacco sales to tackling opioid addiction in our neighborhoods. I am looking forward to working closely with her to make Chicago a safer, healthier and more equitable city."

Dr. Arwady, MD, MPH, has been at CDPH since 2015 in the role of Chief Medical Officer before serving as Acting Commissioner for the last seven months. In addition to the essential public health work the department does--such as food and environmental inspections, preparing for public health emergencies, administering vaccines, and much more--CDPH has re-committed itself to addressing social determinants of health, the root causes of health inequities facing some Chicago communities.

"I'm humbled by this opportunity and excited to continue working alongside Mayor Lightfoot and the entire City Council to make Chicago a healthier, more equitable city serving every resident," said Dr. Arwady. "Promoting health equity and closing the racial life expectancy gap drive what we do at CDPH, and I look forward to working with the mayor, the City Council and other city departments, and our many community partners to make that shared vision a reality."

As Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Arwady oversaw the disease control, environmental health, emergency preparedness, and behavioral health divisions. She has also worked on disease outbreaks, immunization promotion, tuberculosis response, substance misuse and more.



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During her time as Chief Medical Officer, Chicago's adolescent immunization rates rose to historic highs, while teen smoking and teen birth rates dropped to historic lows, with the greatest decreases in teen births among African Americans. Dr. Arwady has overseen CDPH's response to the opioid epidemic, building the city's treatment infrastructure and response capacity by bringing in new federal funding. She has emphasized the use of data driven approaches in her work with the department, closer collaboration with medical providers, and innovative initiatives designed to address the root cause of social health inequities – including the Framework for Mental Health Equity and Getting to Zero, an ambitious plan to end the HIV epidemic in Chicago by 2030.

Dr. Arwady also helped oversee Healthy Chicago 2.0, a comprehensive plan that engages partners throughout the city to address health inequities and improve the health of all Chicagoans. An updated version of that plan, Healthy Chicago 2025, is now in development.

Prior to CDPH, Dr. Arwady worked for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer. In that role, she focused on outbreak response, including international work on Ebola and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome. While based at the Illinois Department of Public Health, she responded to disease outbreaks across the state.

Dr. Arwady earned her bachelor's degree from Harvard University and her master's degree in public health from Columbia University. She completed medical school and clinical training at Yale University. She is a board-certified internal medicine physician and pediatrician, and she continues to see primary care patients weekly as a volunteer at Chicago's largest free clinic.

The City engaged in a national search interviewing candidates who hailed from cities throughout the United States. The process included two rounds of preliminary interviews with several candidates followed by interviews with two finalists.

The Chicago Department of Public Health promotes and improves health by engaging residents, communities and partners in establishing and implementing policies and services that prioritize Chicagoans and neighborhoods with the greatest need. The department places a major emphasis on collecting, analyzing and disseminating data, and in collaboration with community partners, using that data to inform program, policy and funding decisions.

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