

From: **Melton, Hughes** <hughes.melton@dbhds.virginia.gov>

Date: Thu, Apr 18, 2019 at 11:46 AM

Subject: DBHDS Leadership Announcement

To:

Dear Colleague,

It is my distinct pleasure to introduce to you Ms. Laura Nuss who will join DBHDS on June 10th to serve as the Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Developmental Services. Laura brings extensive experience as a provider, senior executive and family member to a loved one with a developmental disability. Most recently as the Director of the D.C. Department of Disability Services she implemented system-wide Person-Centered Thinking, Employment First! and quality management initiatives. Her nine years of leadership took D.C. from 48th to 8th in the UCP IDD inclusions rankings. Ms. Nuss worked closely with the Department of Justice to conclude a 40+ year class action lawsuit and successfully exited the ensuing settlement agreement. During this process she worked to move the District to a cross-disability system and will assist Virginia to do the same.

Ms. Nuss has served in other leadership positions in Connecticut, North Carolina and Pennsylvania. Her work with CMS and state Medicaid programs will help the Commonwealth move forward with Medicaid Behavioral Health Redesign and implement Medicaid Expansion. She served as President of the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services in 2016 and is known nationally for her collaborative approach that engages the entire spectrum of stakeholders to make organizations and care delivery systems more effective. In her off-time Laura enjoys gardening, golf and time with family.

I would also like to extend my deep appreciation to Ms. Heather Norton who will continue to serve as Acting Deputy Commissioner of Developmental Services until June 10th, at which time she will resume her position as Director of Community Support Services with the added responsibility to lead DBHDS's Crisis Workgroup in cooperation with DMAS to create child and adult cross disability mobile crisis teams within Virginia's Comprehensive Crisis System. The build out of Virginia's cross-disability crisis service system is crucial to decreasing the state mental health hospital census by successfully providing crisis intervention services in the community. Heather brings extensive experience in both behavioral health and developmental disability services from her work in Pennsylvania and Virginia and is very well positioned to lead this important work.

Sincerely,
Hughes

S. Hughes Melton, MD, MBA
Commissioner
Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services