



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Dave A. Chokshi, MD MSc
Commissioner

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DOHMH APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF MENTAL HYGIENE

Dr. Chinazo O. Cunningham will lead the Division of Mental Hygiene, which oversees the agency's work on mental health, alcohol and drug use prevention, care and treatment, health promotion for justice-impacted populations, among other bureaus.

May 27, 2021 – The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has appointed Dr. Chinazo O. Cunningham to serve as the Executive Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. She joins the agency from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine where she is a Professor of Medicine, Family and Social Medicine, and Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and the Director of Diversity Affairs for the Department of Medicine.

“For decades, Dr. Cunningham has built programs and services for marginalized people,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Dave A. Chokshi**. “Her experience and expertise in behavioral health will build upon our judgment-free approach to working on behalf of New Yorkers who too often face stigma and discrimination.”

“After having collaborated with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for many years, I am very excited to join it,” said **Deputy Commissioner Dr. Chinazo O. Cunningham**. “I look forward to implementing innovative, equity-driven, evidence-based initiatives to improve the lives of people with mental health and substance use issues.”

Dr. Cunningham has more than 20 years’ experience in research, care and program-development for marginalized groups such as people who use drugs with or who are put at-risk for HIV infection. She has also partnered with community to develop pioneering programs to promote the health of these populations.

Dr. Cunningham led one of the first clinics in New York City to integrate buprenorphine into primary care, which subsequently expanded across seven clinics citywide. She also went on to train hundreds of doctors in the treatment of substance use disorders in primary care.

Dr. Cunningham received her undergraduate degree from Northwestern University, her medical degree from the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), and completed her residency in primary care internal medicine at UCSF and New York University (NYU). She spent a year as chief of residency at NYU. She also holds a master’s degree in clinical research methods that she completed during her time at Einstein.

The Division of Mental Hygiene works on a range of programs and services for New Yorkers focused on mental health, substance use, developmental disabilities and health promotion for justice-impacted populations, among others.

Dr. Cunningham's will officially assume the role on June 1.

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