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Health policy expert and economist Caprice Knapp named director of North Dakota Human Services' Medical Services Division

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services announced today that health policy expert Caprice Knapp has been selected to lead its Medical Services Division, which administers Medicaid services, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), autism services and other related health services that benefit vulnerable North Dakotans. The division has a 2019-2021 general fund budget of about \$716 million.

"We look forward to Caprice joining our team to continue the important work being done in the Medicaid area," said department Executive Director Chris Jones. "Her extensive past experience in this arena will help us press forward with the strategies identified for our agency and the state of North Dakota and deliver critical services more effectively and efficiently to North Dakotans."

"Gov. Burgum and I remain grateful to her predecessor Maggie Anderson who retired in May and whose public service to North Dakota spanned three decades and included leadership of the department and the division where she led efforts expanding health coverage for children with special needs, in-home care options for people with disabilities, and the legislatively-authorized expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act," Jones said.

Prior to joining the department, Knapp was the federal policy director of Molina Healthcare, a Fortune 500, multi-state managed care organization specializing in Medicaid and Medicare programs. Knapp is a former Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellow for the U.S. House of Representatives' Energy and Commerce Committee from 2017-2018, where she researched and helped draft bills related to opioids in public health and Medicaid, Medicaid drug pricing and other health policies.

Her Medicaid and CHIP public policy experience also includes working for the Colorado Office of State Planning and Budgeting and Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. There she developed executive branch budget requests and participated in the development of an innovative 1115 waiver to streamline CHIP and Medicaid eligibility systems resulting in economic efficiencies and increased access to care.

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Knapp has a North Dakota connection. In 1884, her paternal ancestors migrated from Connecticut to the Milnor, N.D., area for better job opportunities and a chance to homestead. More than 130 years later, Knapp said her family is excited to follow in their footsteps and is moving to North Dakota for the same reasons: opportunity and a better quality of life.

“As Medicaid Director, I will have an opportunity to lead a team with a focus on improving the health of vulnerable North Dakotans, ensuring efficient use of taxpayer dollars, and building and maintaining trusting relationships with the health care community,” she said. “Compared to other states, the decision to come to North Dakota was easy when we considered the excellent schools for our daughters, the state’s beauty, and the sense of community we felt from everyone we met.”

Knapp’s professional experience also includes applied academic research and consulting. As a research associate professor at Pennsylvania State University, she was involved in health policy and health economics research and served as director of an international consortium focused on connecting research to build capacity and drive innovation in health care. At the University of Florida, she collaborated with colleagues on over \$20 million in grants and contracts to fund Medicaid and CHIP health policy and health economics research projects evaluating quality of care measures, primary care delivery reform, Medicaid waivers and managed care programs.

She earned her doctoral and master’s degrees in economics and completed a post-doctoral fellowship in child health services research from the University of Florida in Gainesville and has a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of South Florida in Tampa.

Knapp will assume leadership of the Medical Services Division of the North Dakota Department of Human Services on Aug. 1, 2019.

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