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Governor's News Release

Gov. Ricketts Names Behavioral Health Director

Lincoln — Today, Governor Pete Ricketts announced the appointment of Sheri Dawson, R.N. as Director for the Division of Behavioral Health for the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

"Sheri brings tested experience and will be an asset to Courtney's team as they work together to transform the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services," said Governor Ricketts. "Ensuring that our state has top-notch behavioral health programming is critical to building the quality of life that all Nebraskans deserve."

"Change is already occurring in Behavioral Health, and Sheri has been a part of effecting that," said DHHS CEO Courtney Phillips. "I look forward to working closely with Sheri to continue to move the division forward, to recruit the best talent for the department, and to fulfill our mission to help Nebraskans live better lives."

Since early this year, Sheri Dawson has served as the acting director of the Division of Behavioral Health. Prior to serving as acting director, she held different roles within the department including Deputy Director of Community-Based Services, QI and Managed Care Administrator, Program Specialist, and Nurse Surveyor/Consultant. Dawson also served as Associate Director of Nursing for the Nebraska Department of Public Institutions.

Previously, Dawson worked as a Nurse Manager at Lincoln General Hospital, now known as Bryan Medical Center-West, in Lincoln, Nebraska, and as a Nurse Instructor at Willow Brook Private Psychiatric Hospital in Waxahachie, Texas.

Dawson holds a Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences for Nurses from Nebraska Wesleyan University, and graduated with distinction from the Bryan Hospital School of Nursing.

Dawson has been named Supervisor of the Year and Employee of the Year during her service at DHHS.

"I am excited to continue my service to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services," said DHHS Behavioral Health Division Director Sheri Dawson. "I appreciate the Governor and Courtney's commitment to

serving Nebraska's most vulnerable, and I look forward to working with them to continue to develop behavioral health programming that meets the needs of our clients."

Dawson's appointment begins immediately. Her salary will be \$135,000.

The six divisions of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, which provide critical services to Nebraska's most vulnerable citizens, have an annual combined budget of \$3.5 billion.

An announcement about the division director for Public Health will be made in the future.

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