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Dr. Scott Harris appointed state health officer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The State Committee of Public Health has appointed Dr. Scott Harris as Alabama’s twelfth state health officer, effective February 21.

"I feel honored and privileged that the State Committee of Public Health granted me this opportunity to address the state’s health care needs and challenges," Dr. Harris said.

Dr. Harris brings a wide range of knowledge and extensive experience that includes more than 19 years in private practice to his position. A graduate of Harding University in Arkansas, he attended medical school at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine and served his residency and internship at Carraway Methodist Medical Center before returning to UAB to complete a fellowship in infectious diseases. In 2017, he was awarded a master’s degree in public health from the UAB School of Public Health with a concentration in health policy.

Dr. Harris practiced infectious disease medicine at Decatur General Hospital and Parkway Medical Center. He served on the Medical Executive Committee, medicine department chairman and director of multiple committees including infection control, pharmacy and therapeutics, and the surgical care improvement project. He is past chairman and current member of the Decatur Morgan Hospital Foundation.

In 2005, he became medical director at the Decatur-Morgan Community Free Clinic. The non-profit clinic offers health care and dental care at no charge to low income, medically uninsured local residents. The clinic relies heavily on volunteers, including community members. Dr. Harris also has served on many international medical missions to Central America, South America and Africa.

In 2015, Dr. Harris joined the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) as area health officer for seven North Alabama counties. For the past six months, he has served as acting state health officer and currently co-chairs the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council.

The Talladega native is a fellow of the American College of Physicians (FACP), Infectious Disease Society of America (FIDSA), and a credentialed HIV specialist, American Academy of HIV Medicine.

The ADPH employs approximately 3,000 and has an annual budget of \$694 million.

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