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## ***More than 20 years of experience will lead Oregon's Health Professionals Program***

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Richard Harris, director of Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) Addictions and Mental Health Division, named Darcy M. Edwards Ph.D., M.S.W., CADC III, manager of the newly created Health Professionals Program.

The program was formed by the passage of Oregon House Bill 2345. This bill directs DHS to establish a consolidated statewide monitoring program for health professionals identified or at high risk of workplace impairment and who have a diagnosed substance use or mental health disorder.

House Bill 2345 abolishes all existing board-operated programs for licensed professionals who are impaired as a result of substance use or mental health disorders, and requires the creation of a consolidated program. This includes dentists, licensed social workers, nurses, pharmacists and physicians. Health licensing boards currently operating such programs will be unable to operate separate, independent programs as of July 1, 2010.

As the Health Professionals Program manager, Dr. Edwards will be responsible for managing the monitoring program for licensees of participating health profession licensing boards.

"Dr. Edwards is a seasoned professional with broad clinical, policy and system development experience at state and local levels," said Harris. "She understands the need to balance public safety with recovery promotion."  
(more)

Dr. Edwards has more than 20 years of experience in Oregon's addiction, prevention, treatment and recovery system. She most recently worked for the Oregon Department of Corrections where she managed contracts for the statewide prison-based substance abuse treatment programs. She also has more than a decade of experience as a clinical and program manager designing and implementing local community-based addiction treatment and recovery services.

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