

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Announces Intent to Nominate Dr. Kaitlan Baston as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health

07/25/2023

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today announced his intention to nominate Kaitlan Baston, MD, MSc, DFASAM as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health. Dr. Baston will assume the role in August following the retirement of Commissioner Judith Persichilli.

"I am thrilled to nominate Dr. Kaitlan Baston as our next Commissioner of the Department of Health," **said Governor Murphy**. "The Department plays a vital role in protecting the public's health, while also promoting healthy communities and constantly improving the quality of health care for all New Jerseyans. Dr. Baston's breadth of experience as a physician, highlighted by her many leadership roles within the addiction and health care space, will make her an exceptional Commissioner at the Department of Health."

"I am deeply grateful to Governor Murphy for entrusting me with this opportunity to serve the people of New Jersey," **said Dr. Kaitlan Baston, incoming Health Commissioner**. "I have spent my career focused on addiction services, maternal and child health, and improving equity through health care in the community, and I am fully committed to using those experiences to create a healthy, equitable state for all. It is an honor to lead the Department following the incredible work and dedication of Commissioner Persichilli during an unprecedented time in public health and I look forward to working with the team to advance the health and equity of all New Jerseyans."

"Working alongside Governor Murphy, whose values mirrored mine in a state I call home, and alongside the dedicated career experts in public health at the Department has been a privilege these past four years," **said outgoing Health Commissioner Judy Persichilli**. "These past few years have also taught us many lessons, perhaps most importantly to pivot and change as we move forward. The Department is more prepared now than ever to face tomorrow's challenges with a foundation built on resiliency, data-driven decision-making, and equity for New Jersey's residents. Dr. Baston is eminently qualified to carry on the Department's critical work in tackling New Jersey's public health crises and fulfilling its mission."

Dr. Baston is the Division Head of Addiction Medicine and Medical Director of the Center for Healing at Cooper University Health Care. She founded the center, which includes integrated pain, addiction, and behavioral health care; an inpatient addiction consult service; outpatient specialty clinics; a wrap-around perinatal substance use disorder program and undergraduate and graduate medical education in addiction medicine and research. Dr. Baston is also an educator and consultant for Zero to Three, an organization focused on ensuring all babies and toddlers have a strong start to life, and an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Cooper Medical School of Rowan University.

Dr. Baston has served on many national level committees including the American Academy of Pediatrics Head Start National Expert Working Group the Facing Addiction Education Committee for National Addiction Curriculum, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Alliance for Innovation in Maternal Health Maternal Opioid Collaborative, and the National Symposium for Addiction Medicine at the White House. She is also a member of several community boards and committees including the Camden County Addiction Awareness Task Force, the Camden County Opioid Settlement Funds board, and the Advanced Practitioner Executive Committee. Dr. Baston has received many awards for her work and most recently honored with the New Jersey Healthcare Innovation Hero Award (2022) and has been listed on the New Jersey Top Female Doctors (2018, 2020, 2022) and New Jersey Top Doctors (2017-2019, 2021, 2022) lists.

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Dr. Baston obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree from Miami University, a Master of Science degree in neuroscience from Kings College London, and an M.D. from Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University. She is also dual boarded in Family Medicine and Addiction Medicine.

For a headshot of Dr. Baston, please click here

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Office of Governor PO Box 001
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