A Message from the Editor

As we go to press with this issue of *Public Health Reports*, the Senate has just confirmed Dr. Regina M. Benjamin as the new Surgeon General and the nation's top doctor under President Barack Obama. In her role as Surgeon General, Dr. Benjamin will also lead the 6,500-member multidisciplinary officer Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service who are responding to health and humanitarian needs in many locations around the world.

Dr. Benjamin, who was nominated by the President in July, is well known as the founder and CEO of the Bayou La Batre Rural Health Clinic in Bayou La Batre, Alabama, a small shrimping village along the Alabama Gulf Coast. She is renowned for keeping the clinic open during two hurricanes—Georges and Katrina. Dr. Benjamin holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Xavier University in New Orleans, Louisiana. She received her doctor of medicine degree from the University of Alabama, Birmingham, as well as a master in business administration degree from Tulane University in New Orleans—the latter while working full-time as a traveling doctor in emergency rooms and making twice-weekly round-trip commutes to New Orleans.

In 1998, she received the Nelson Mandela Award for Health and Human Rights. In 2002, she became the president of the Alabama Medical Association, making her the first female African American president of a state medical society in the United States. And in 2008, she was one of 25 recipients of the "genius" grant awarded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

In nominating Dr. Benjamin, President Obama cited her experience with patients in the lower socioeconomic spectrum and underserved populations, as well as her dedication to prevention and wellness programs as primary ways to reduce disease. This issue of *PHR* also highlights critical health needs among special populations, including American Indians, rural Appalachians, homeless minority young people, immigrant men, young pregnant women with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and long-haul truck drivers and their commercial sex contacts.

Prevention efforts among underserved and vulnerable populations are also the subject of the accompanying *PHR* supplement, "New Strategies in the Delivery of HIV-Prevention Services for Minority Groups in the U.S." This supplement focuses on innovations and advances in HIV prevention targeting at-risk populations. These advances reflect the current landscape of at-risk groups compared with the early days of the epidemic.

When President Obama announced her nomination in July, Dr. Benjamin said, "My hope . . . is to be America's doctor, America's family physician." *PHR* welcomes Dr. Benjamin in her new role as the Surgeon General and looks forward to her leadership as we seek to advance and strengthen public health systems across the nation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have served *PHR* as external peer reviewers. The well-being of this journal depends upon the generosity of those who donate their time and expertise to this very important phase of the consideration process. The authors and our readership benefit immensely from your feedback. The scope and impact of *PHR* continue to grow with the help of contributions from experts like you. If you have not reviewed for us in the past and would like to be considered for this role in the future, please contact our Managing Editor, Julie Keefe, at julie.keefe@hhs.gov for more information.

Laurence D. Reed
Captain, U.S. Public Health Service