Dr. Charity Thoman Appointed Health Officer

On Tuesday, January 21, 2014, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors appointed Charity Thoman, MD, MPH as the County’s Health Officer.

Dr. Thoman will operate as the Health Officer while Dr. Takashi Wada continues to provide leadership for two large departments, Public Health and Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services. Dr. Wada will maintain his role as Deputy Health Officer during this period and he will be appointed the County’s Health Officer once his dual-department leadership assignment has concluded.

The responsibilities and authority of the Health Officer are significant. This is a legally appointed position and is responsible for the oversight of public health issues affecting our community such as communicable diseases, outbreak response, environmental safety, preventive and educational efforts, and communication with state and federal health authorities. The position is held by a physician who serves as advisor and leader to interdisciplinary teams on matters of public health importance.

Dr. Thoman joined the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department in 2011 as the Deputy Health Officer. She has served in the role of Tuberculosis Controller, Communicable Disease Controller, Medical Director of the Public Health Lab, and HIV clinician. Dr. Thoman is on the Board of Directors of the Santa Barbara County Medical Society and is active in our community. She and Dr. Wada will continue to work closely together to promote and advance public health within Santa Barbara County.

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