

# COLORADO MEDICAID DIRECTOR ACCEPTED INTO NATIONAL MEDICAID LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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DENVER – June 26, 2009 – The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing announced today that Sandeep Wadhwa, MD, Colorado Medicaid director, was competitively selected to participate in the inaugural *Medicaid Leadership Institute* along with five additional Medicaid directors: Toby Douglas, California; Carolyn Ingram, New Mexico; MaryAnne Lindeblad, Washington State; Lynn Mitchell, Oklahoma; and Carol Steckel, Alabama.

Dr. Wadhwa was chosen based on his commitment to public service and the improvement of public programs; his vision of Medicaid's role in promoting high-quality, cost-effective care; his individual goals for improving leadership skills, and a readiness to contribute data and analytics for national research.

The 12-month *Institute* is designed to enhance the strategic thinking, substantive knowledge, individual leadership, and technical skills that directors need to effectively lead and foster innovation, in their state Medicaid programs. The program will be managed by the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) and directed by Melanie Bella, senior vice president at CHCS and former Indiana Medicaid director.

“At a time when national health care reform decisions will greatly affect their programs and responsibilities, these six individuals form an exceptionally talented inaugural class for the *Medicaid Leadership Institute*,” said Tommy Thompson, Former Governor of Wisconsin, who chairs the program's National Advisory Committee. “These directors will be perfectly positioned to lead their states and the nation in achieving better quality care for every taxpayer dollar invested in publicly financed health care.”

“Colorado is a national leader in Medicaid reform because of Dr. Wadhwa's innovative health policy and management experience,” says Joan Henneberry, executive director. “His participation

in the *Medicaid Leadership Institute* will support the successful implementation of the Colorado Health Care Affordability Act expanding health care coverage to over 100,000 Coloradans.”

The Colorado Health Care Affordability Act, signed by Gov. Ritter in April, will allow the state to generate an additional \$600 million a year through a provider fee, and draw down \$600 million in federal Medicaid matching funds. The combined \$1.2 billion will support Medicaid and Child Health Plan *Plus* expansions and be used to improve hospital reimbursement rates for services provided through the Medicaid and the Colorado Indigent Care Programs.

**About the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing:** The Department administers the Medicaid and Child Health Plan *Plus* programs as well as a variety of other programs for Colorado’s low-income, elderly and people with disabilities. The mission of the Department is to improve access to cost-effective, quality health care services for Coloradans. For more information about the Department, please visit [Colorado.gov/hcpf](http://Colorado.gov/hcpf).