

NEWS RELEASE

Date: June 26, 2014

Contact: Shere Saneishi-Kim
Community Relations & Communications Manager
(808) 529-9209

Nathan Hokama
Strategic Communication Solutions
(808) 226-7470

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hawaii Dental Service President and CEO Faye Watanabe Kurren to Retire in December 2014

Leaves HDS In Strong Financial Position to Carry on Mission of Making Dental Care Accessible, Affordable

Faye Watanabe Kurren, president and chief executive officer of Hawaii Dental Service (HDS), will retire at the end of this year after leading the company through a number of strategic initiatives that leave the organization well positioned for the future. Kurren has been HDS's top executive for the past 11 years.

HDS is the state's leading dental benefits provider and offers the largest network of participating dentists, including specialists, with a participation rate that exceeds 95 percent. HDS has also grown to more than 600,000 enrollees, who reside in Hawaii, the U.S. Mainland, Guam, and Saipan.

"Faye has put HDS on a solid path for the future and will leave the company in excellent shape," said Michael O'Malley, chairperson of the HDS board and partner in law firm Goodsill Anderson Quinn & Stifel. "HDS now enjoys strong capitalization and expanded organizational capacity, which is remarkable since HDS's administrative expenses are considerably lower than the industry average. We regret her decision to retire and thank her for her outstanding leadership."

Although HDS is an affiliate of the national Delta Dental Plans Association, Kurren kept a strong Hawaii sense of place in HDS's work environment and practices. Under her leadership, HDS offered more flexible dental plans tailored for Hawaii's needs, and made local customer service a priority and competitive advantage.

Kurren made HDS's mission of making oral health care more accessible and affordable for Hawaii residents her personal mission. In her capacity as the chief executive of the company, Kurren expanded dental benefits plans and services to serve all Hawaii residents.

HDS began to administer dental benefits to families eligible for the state's QUEST (Medicaid) program in 2013. HDS also offers its group and individual dental plans through the Hawaii Health Connector, the health insurance marketplace, to further reach the uninsured or underinsured, and to be a resource for Hawaii's small businesses.

Through Kurren's support of her staff, HDS emerged as a leader among other Delta Dental Plan affiliates. HDS has been able to leverage its locally developed, proprietary information technology systems to serve other Delta Dental affiliates with improvements in customer service, claims processing, and turnaround time for payments to participating dentists in their respective regions.

The combination of more flexible dental plan offerings, expansion into QUEST, and ability to share its claims processing system diversified the company's revenue streams and contributed to consistent revenue growth over the past 10 years.

Through her guidance of the HDS Foundation, Kurren worked tirelessly to significantly increase funding for programs that provide oral health education and access to dental care on Oahu and the neighbor islands. Last year alone, the HDS Foundation gave grants totaling more than \$400,000 to various organizations. Grant recipients have included Aloha Medical Mission, Kokua Kalihi Valley, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center's Dental Clinic, Waikiki Health and other nonprofit organizations that provide dental care to underserved or uninsured populations.

Recruitment to fill the CEO position is currently under way.

#

About Hawaii Dental Service

HDS is the largest dental benefits provider in the state, serving more than half a million members statewide, Guam and Saipan. It has the largest network of dentists of all the dental plans offered in the state, with more than 95 percent of licensed, practicing dentists.

HDS has been a part of Delta Dental Plans Association (DDPA), the nation's largest and most experienced dental benefits company, since 1966. This affiliation gives members access to a nationwide network of participating dentists.