

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau Chief Takes the Helm
of Massachusetts Public Health Association**

The Executive Board of the Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA) is pleased to announce its recent hire of Carlene Pavlos as its new Executive Director effective April 1, 2018. In this role, Ms. Pavlos will lead MPHA's strategic vision and manage implementation of its organizational goals to further MPHA's advocacy and policy successes advancing health equity in the Commonwealth.

MPHA is a statewide non-profit membership organization that promotes a healthy Massachusetts through advocacy, education, community organizing, and coalition building with a focus on eliminating health disparities and creating healthy communities for all. MPHA's recent accomplishments include successfully leading the campaign for the Complete Streets Program, which provides grants to cities and towns for projects to make streets safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. MPHA also led the campaign for the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund, a first-in-the-nation program investing in evidence-based interventions that keep residents healthy by linking clinical care and community-based services.

"Through my work with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health I have learned how policies, systems, and environments can foster equitable opportunity for everyone to reach good health. I am thrilled to come to MPHA where I can realize my passion for social justice by advocating for progressive policy change at the state level that will address the social and environmental barriers to health," Ms. Pavlos said. "It is an exciting time for public health in Massachusetts and also a critical time for the state to show leadership in exposing and dismantling the policies and systems that create racial and socio-economic health disparities."

Ms. Pavlos comes to MPHA with nearly 20 years of leadership experience at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and over 25 years' experience working to address violence against women and youth from a social justice perspective. Prior to coming to MPHA, Ms. Pavlos served as Director of the Bureau of Community Health and Prevention (BCHAP) at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for eight years.

While at BCHAP, Ms. Pavlos led the development of a Racial Equity Initiative to center racial justice objectives within bureau programs and policies and to foster an environment where truth telling and learning about racial oppression can occur. Ms. Pavlos expanded BCHAP's reach and successes by identifying and seizing new opportunities for cross-sector collaboration and systems change and developed high functioning creative teams able to drive BCHAP forward to the next level.

Ms. Pavlos has a long-time volunteer commitment to supporting incarcerated women. Since 1991, she has led a writers' group at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution in Framingham, helping the women develop new skills and have an opportunity for self-expression.

“Carlene has worked in partnership with MPHA for many years and understands our deep desire to create and change policies that will enhance basic human needs for all residents, particularly residents of color and residents that have not had equitable opportunities for better health,” said MPHA President Jessica Collins. “We look forward to working with Carlene and having her leadership pave the successes ahead of us as we continue our ambitious policy agenda.”

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The **Massachusetts Public Health Association** (MPHA) is a private, 501(c)(3) non-profit, statewide membership organization that promotes a healthy Massachusetts through advocacy, education, community organizing, and coalition building. Our focus is on policies and programs that prevent illness, disease, and injury, particularly among those vulnerable to disparities in health status. MPHA was founded in 1879 and is a leading affiliate of the American Public Health Association.