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HHS Secretary Sebelius names Alaskan to national committee studying rural and underserved health care shortage

(Anchorage, AK) — Alice J. Rarig, planning team supervisor for the state's Health Planning and Systems Development Section, has been named to a federal committee reviewing and updating criteria used to define "medically underserved" and "health professional shortage" areas.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced Rarig's appointment Friday. The 24-member committee has members from 20 states and is tasked with representing the entire country.

Rarig is a senior Planner (IV) with the Department of Health and Social Services. She has worked in the divisions of Public Health and Health Care Services since 1997, when she was hired to assist the Alaska Primary Care Office with shortage designation applications and telemedicine development in Alaska.

Rarig holds a doctorate in health policy and management from the University of Massachusetts/Amherst; a master of public health from Yale; a master of arts from Yale in Soviet and East European studies; and a bachelor's degree in Russian history and literature from Harvard.

"Dr. Rarig's educational background, professional experience, and knowledge of rural, frontier and underserved communities will be great assets for the national committee," Alaska Office of Rural Health director Patricia Carr said.

The full announcement, contained in the Health Resources and Services Administration media release, can be found at <http://www.hrsa.gov/about/news/pressreleases/100709shortagecommitteeappointments.html>.

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