

Sunday, June 7, 2020

TO: Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, Meeting on Tuesday, June 9th

FROM: James Flaherty, MD, Deputy Health Officer

RE: Noemi Doohan, MD, PhD, MPH, as Interim Health Officer

Supervisors Brown, Gjerde, Haschak, McCowen, and Williams:

I am writing in support of Dr. Doohan as Mendocino's Health Officer, and in recognition of the consistently effective and professional job she has done in the role to date. Specifically, I am writing to urge you to continue to have a contract with Dr. Doohan, keeping her as the Interim Health Officer, until such time when the County receives an application from a viable candidate, and an experienced full time Health Officer can be hired to replace her. As far as I know, there has been no applicant for this position since Dr. Iser.

As you know, she has been a resident of Mendocino County and considers it her home, is a dedicated and competent physician, and a tested and consistently effective Public Health Officer; she has demonstrated commitment to the health and safety of our County Residents, and has implemented sound Public Health Orders consistent with the containment and mitigation advisories and strategies of the CDC, CDPH and the Governor's Office. Her Orders have followed expert recommendations regarding Non-Pharmacological Interventions, and have allowed for concurrent protection of the public's health, safe stepwise re-opening to allow for early economic recovery, and taken into account the special needs of the County's populations most vulnerable to COVID infection, and prioritized their protection. At the same time, she has always reminded us to keep up our guard against a pandemic that is still in its early stages.

She has provided knowledgeable leadership, and is the only public health physician we've had giving continuous, sustained leadership (with no days off) in our County's response to the pandemic; she holds the institutional memory of this event in our County since the Public Health Emergency was declared. She has performed in the position of Public Health Officer, without faltering, and has achieved the desired public health outcomes to date. I recommend that you keep her in this position.