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**Vickie Yates Brown Glisson**  
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**Statewide News Release**

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**CHFS Announces Two Appointments for Behavioral Health Department**  
*Morris Will Serve as Commissioner and Gedra as Deputy Commissioner*

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 4, 2016)**— Health and Family Services Cabinet Secretary Vickie Yates Brown Glisson today announced that Wendy Morris, a veteran healthcare administrator and nurse, has been appointed commissioner of the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (BHDID). James Gedra, a licensed psychologist who recently served as a director at Central State Hospital in Louisville, has been named deputy commissioner.

“The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is pleased to announce the appointment of these two highly qualified, experienced individuals to lead the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities,” said Sec. Glisson. “BHDID serves some of the state’s most vulnerable individuals, with significant and challenging diagnoses. Commissioner Morris and Deputy Gedra bring a wealth of experience, strong leadership skills and compassion to their roles as we work toward a model that values evidence-based practices with an emphasis on a high level of individual, family and community involvement.”

Morris joined BHDID in 2013 as deputy commissioner after previously holding various leadership positions in the field of behavioral health, including in-patient, out-patient and home health. She previously served as the executive director of Appalachian Regional Healthcare’s (ARH) Psychiatric Center in Hazard, community chief nursing officer for ARH’s Regional Medical Center, and clinical nurse specialist for ARH’s Division of Home Services, where she implemented a corporate-wide psychiatric home health care program. Morris has also worked in community mental health, general hospital, and academic settings where she taught and mentored many who remain colleagues in the field today.

With both academic and practical experience, Gedra has a background in forensic psychology and substance abuse treatment. Most recently, he served as the director of the recovery center and director of psychology at Central State, where he was responsible for integrating the recovery center’s holistic approach across all hospital departments and activities. He previously worked as an assistant professor of psychology at both Murray State University and University of Findlay, and worked in various community-based behavioral health programs in Kentucky and Ohio.

Both appointments became effective Aug. 1.

*The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.*