



**For Immediate Release**



**National Leader in Health Information Technology  
Named CEO of Health Sciences South Carolina**

*Organization focused on using innovation to make good health possible for all South Carolinians*

COLUMBIA, S.C., January 29, 2015 -- [Health Sciences South Carolina](#) (HSSC) has named Helga Rippen, MD, PhD, MPH, FACPM, president and chief executive officer of the “first in the nation” statewide healthcare research collaborative composed of health systems, universities and medical schools. [Rippen](#) is a nationally recognized expert in health information technology (IT) and its use in transforming healthcare delivery systems and public health, having played a key role in creating the nation’s health IT infrastructure, public policy, and clinical and industry applications.

Rippen replaces HSSC Interim President and CEO Todd Thornburg, who served in the position following the December 2013 retirement of President and CEO Jay Moskowitz. Rippen will also have a clinical faculty appointment at the University of South Carolina (USC) Arnold School of Public Health.

Since 2004, HSSC has focused on improving the health status of South Carolinians through collaborative research and health system improvement. From the beginning, HSSC’s strength has been its ability to convene diverse organizations and foster collaboration toward achieving the vision of a healthier South Carolina. [HSSC members](#) include Clemson University, Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), and USC with its medical schools in Columbia and Greenville; along with AnMed Health, Greenville Health System, MUSC Health, McLeod Health, Palmetto Health, Self Regional Healthcare, and Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System.

Commenting on the appointment, HSSC Board Chair and USC President Harris Pastides said, “Health information technology is a critical enabler of our aim to transform healthcare delivery and public health in South Carolina. Dr. Rippen’s experience as one of the architects of the nation’s health informatics system, her proven success in creating more cost efficient health systems, and her unique perspective as a physician make her the right person to advance HSSC’s vision of improving South Carolina’s health status and increasing access to affordable, quality healthcare services.”

Rippen, who has a self-described “passion for paying it forward,” has been a leader in bridging technology and healthcare to maximize value to patients, clinicians, and the healthcare sector for over two decades. She was the chief health information officer and vice president of Westat’s INSIGHT, Center for Health Information Technology, consulting with government and private sector clients; and chief health information officer and vice president of Health IT for Hospital Corporation of America (HCA), a leading provider of healthcare services, with more than 150 hospitals and 115 freestanding surgery centers in two countries. Rippen served as a senior advisor for health IT for the Secretary's office at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services where she was involved with the creation of the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology.

Previously, Rippen was director of the Science and Technology Policy Institute for RAND, supporting the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. She served as director of Health IT for Pfizer Health Solutions, and was the founder of the Health IT Institute for Mitretek Systems (now Noblis), a prominent Washington, DC-based non-profit group. She has also worked in the areas of bioterrorism, infectious disease and disaster response, and was recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for distinguished service during Hurricane Katrina.

Rippen earned a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Florida Atlantic University, a PhD in Biomedical Engineering from Duke University, a medical degree from the University of Florida, and a Master’s of Public Health from Johns Hopkins University. She completed her residency in Preventive Medicine at Johns Hopkins as well as fellowships at the Max Planck Institute for Biochemistry in Germany and at the University of British Columbia. She is board certified in Public Health and General Preventive Medicine and holds a specialty board certification in Clinical Informatics.

“I’m honored to join an organization that is nationally recognized as a leader and a model to foster collaboration among leading healthcare stakeholders with the shared vision of improving health and wellbeing of South Carolinians,” said Rippen. “I am proud that HSSC has provided and will continue to provide our members with the infrastructure, tools, and innovations they need to empower patients, healthcare providers and researchers to make good health possible. I will work to ensure HSSC continues to be instrumental in moving South Carolina forward as a leader in health care.”

Her appointment is well timed. The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) recently presented HSSC with a [2014 AAMC Learning Health System Champion Research Award](#) for the creation of the South Carolina Learning Health System.

#### **About Health Sciences South Carolina**

Health Sciences South Carolina (HSSC) was established in 2004 as the nation’s first biomedical research collaborative. Today its member organizations include seven of the state’s largest health systems, including AnMed Health, Greenville Health System, McLeod Health, the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Hospital Authority, Palmetto Health, Self Regional Healthcare, and Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System, as well as the state’s largest research-intensive universities, including Clemson University, MUSC, and the University of South Carolina with its Schools of Medicine at Columbia and Greenville. The unique collaboration was formed with the vision of improving South Carolina’s public health and economic wellbeing through research. Visit [www.healthsciencessc.org](http://www.healthsciencessc.org).

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