



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **COMMONWEALTH FUND NAMES DAVID BLUMENTHAL, M.D., AS ITS NEXT PRESIDENT**

*Nationally Recognized Health Care Leader to Succeed Karen Davis as the Foundation's President on January 1, 2013*

**July 26, 2012, New York, NY**—David Blumenthal, M.D., one of the nation's preeminent health information technology experts, thought leaders on primary care and professionalism, and foremost health policy scholars, has been named the next president of The Commonwealth Fund by the foundation's board, to succeed Karen Davis on January 1, 2013. Dr. Blumenthal, currently Samuel O. Thier Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and Chief Health Information and Innovation Officer at Partners Healthcare System in Boston, has also been elected a member of the Fund's board of directors. He currently serves as the chairman of the Commonwealth Fund Commission on a High Performance Health System.

In making the announcement, Commonwealth Fund board chairman James R. Tallon, Jr., said, "We are extremely fortunate to have Dr. Blumenthal take the helm of the Fund at a crucial time in the drive to achieve a high performance health system. If the U.S. is to realize the triple aims of better health, better care, and lower cost, it will need over the next 10 years unstinting efforts by health policy and practice leaders like Dr. Blumenthal. He is ideally suited to carry forward The Commonwealth Fund's significant role in advancing delivery and payment system changes that will improve system performance."

Dr. Blumenthal served from 2009 to 2011 as U.S. National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, with the charge to build an interoperable, private, and secure nationwide health information system and to support the widespread, meaningful use of health IT. He succeeded in putting in place one of the largest publicly funded infrastructure investments the nation has ever made in such a short time period, in health care or any other field.

"With his national stature, broad experience, and skill in leading while building consensus, Dr. Blumenthal is perfectly suited to lead the foundation in moving the U.S. health care system to one that achieves access to safe, high-quality, efficient, and effective care for all Americans," said current president Karen Davis. "He is already providing strong leadership of the Fund's Commission on a High Performance Health System, and will be able to move swiftly into leading the Fund as a whole."

Prior to his appointment as the National Coordinator for Health IT, Dr. Blumenthal was a practicing primary care physician; director of the Institute for Health Policy; and professor of medicine and health policy at Massachusetts General Hospital/Partners Healthcare System and Harvard Medical School. He is the author of more than 250 books and scholarly publications, including most recently, *Heart of Power: Health and Politics in the Oval Office*. He is a member of the Institute of Medicine and a former board member and national correspondent for the *New England Journal of Medicine*. He has also served on the staff of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research; is the founding chairman of AcademyHealth, the national organization of health services researchers; and a trustee of the University of Pennsylvania Health System.

In reflecting on Karen Davis' achievements as Commonwealth Fund president since 1995 and what he hopes to achieve as the foundation's new head, Dr. Blumenthal said, "Karen Davis is one of the outstanding thinkers and leaders on health care reform. She positioned the foundation to make a major contribution to the recent health care reform debate and to the implementation of enacted reforms. She has created an extremely strong institution for advancing efforts to tackle the major problems in our health care system, with particular attention to health care for vulnerable populations. In leading the Commonwealth Fund, my aim will be to honor Karen's leadership by ensuring that we continue to contribute significantly to the breakthroughs in performance that are needed to make our health system sustainable."

Dr. Blumenthal received his undergraduate, medical, and public policy degrees from Harvard University and completed his residency in internal medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital. With his colleagues from Harvard Medical School, he authored the seminal studies on the adoption and use of health information technology in the United States. He has held several leadership positions in medicine, government, and academia, including senior vice president at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital and executive director of the Center for Health Policy and Management and lecturer on public policy at the Kennedy School of Government. He served previously on the board of the University of Chicago Health System and is recipient of the Distinguished Investigator Award from AcademyHealth, an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Rush University and an Honorary Doctor of Science from the State University of New York Downstate.

**The Commonwealth Fund is a private foundation supporting independent research on health policy reform and a high performance health system.**