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Department of Health's Patricia Heu receives federal lifetime achievement award for improving maternal & child health

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health's (DOH) Patricia Heu, MD, MPH, was recently awarded the Title V Lifetime Achievement Award from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau for her outstanding contributions in the field of maternal and child health over the past 40 years. This award recognizes her demonstrated leadership in positively impacting the children and youth with special health needs population at the federal, state, and local levels.

The Title V (Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant Program) is a key source of support for promoting and improving the health and well-being of the nation's mothers, children, including those with special needs, and their families.

"My journey started as a young pediatrician in a rural Title V clinic, and I've been with Title V ever since," said Dr. Heu. "We continue working toward the optimal health, development, and well-being of children and youth with special health care needs and their families through family-professional partnership, medical home, health insurance, screening, community-based services, and transition to adult life."

Dr. Heu has served as the Chief of DOH's Children with Special Health Needs Branch (CSHNB) since 1996 and has been with the DOH since 1982. As a leader in public health, she has a history of implementing programs and services into CSHNB and inspiring staff and colleagues to pursue leadership in the field of maternal and child health/children with special health care needs.

Dr. Heu developed the Children and Youth with Special Health Needs Program, which provides access to care while also including programs that support statewide systems-building efforts. This includes the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and the Healthy Child Care Hawaii program, which supports child care health and safety efforts. She worked with Dr. Calvin Sia and other leaders to develop the Medical Home model, focusing on patient-centered primary care that is comprehensive and efficient.

"Dr. Heu was instrumental in transitioning the CSHNB from direct services towards a public health approach, while maintaining a safety net for children to ensure access to specialty care," said Matthew Shim, Title V Director for the State of Hawai'i. "This award recognizes her

unwavering dedication to our families and especially children with special health care needs throughout the state.”

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