

## Eli's Hospice Insider

### Hospice News: Verma Departs, Longtime CMS Staffer Steps Into Acting Administrator Role

**New agency head has a hospital background.**

With the turnover of presidents comes the turnover of their cabinet members on down - including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services administrator.

**Trump**-era Administrator **Seema Verma** has stepped down. Until a permanent CMS administrator can be named, the **Biden** administration has tapped a 30-year CMS veteran to head the agency, according to press reports. **Liz Richter**, who will step into the roll, has been the Deputy Center Director of the CMS Center for Medicare since 2007, according to her biography on the CMS website.

Richter has a hospital background, starting in 1990 with her Bureau of Policy Development position working on inpatient hospital payment policy and then other provider type policies, CMS says. In 1998, Richter moved to the Office of Financial Management and became Director of the Financial Services Group there in 2001. In 2003, she became Director of the Hospital and Ambulatory Policy Group.



"Liz is a solid CMS staffer," says National Association for Home Care & Hospice President **William Dombi**. "Very experienced," Dombi tells AAPC.

Until a confirmation hearing can be held for President Biden's nominee for Health and Human Services Secretary, **Xavier Becerra**, he has appointed HHS **Norris Cochran** as acting Secretary. Cochran is the HHS Deputy Assistant Secretary of Budget and served as Acting HHS Secretary from January to February 2017.

"These public servants have significant experience in the agencies they will now temporarily lead," a White House release says.

As of press time, no hearing had yet been scheduled for Becerra's confirmation. That's despite other Biden cabinet positions being confirmed, ranging from Treasury Secretary **Janet Yellen** to Transportation Secretary **Pete Buttigieg**.