

Merle G. McPherson, MD, MPH

Merle G. McPherson, MD, MPH is the Director of the Division of Services for Children with Special Health Needs in the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB), HRSA, DHHS. As Director, Dr. McPherson oversees the Genetic Services Program and the implementation of a 10 year action plan to achieve community-based service systems for children with special health care needs and their families.

She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Preventive Medicine and an Honorary Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She has also worked with the Departments of Health and of Human Resources in the District of Columbia, with the Hawaii Department of Health, and with the Maryland Department of Health.

During a long and distinguished Federal career, Dr. McPherson has created a new model of health care delivery for children with special health care needs. In 1982, Dr. McPherson provided the leadership for the ASurgeon General's Workshop on Children with Handicaps and their Families@ and over the past two decades has successfully used the workshop as a catalyst to transform the MCHB's legislative mandate and mission. Her leadership has been instrumental in replacing a deficit-based, categorical, medical model of care with a consumer-driven, family-centered, and strength-based comprehensive model, which has become the standard of care for all children. This model is being increasingly utilized in adult health care settings as well. Dr. McPherson has also led the way to expand the family-centered care model for children with special health care needs internationally.