



Marcia Nielsen, PhD, MPH
Executive Director, Kansas Health Policy Authority (KHPA)

Marcia Nielsen, Ph.D., MPH, serves as the Executive Director of the Kansas Health Policy Authority (KHPA). In this role, Nielsen oversees day-to-day operations of the KHPA, an independent executive branch agency created by the legislature in 2005. Dr. Nielsen is responsible for the overall operation and strategic direction of the organization under the direction of the Authority Board. KHPA oversees the state's Medicaid and State Childrens' Health Insurance Programs, in addition to the State Employees Health Benefit Plan and a number of other smaller programs. The KHPA is charged by statute to develop and maintain a coordinated health policy agenda

for the state using data driven health policy and promoting health promotion and disease prevention public health strategies.

Prior to her appointment as executive director of the Kansas Health Policy Authority, Dr. Nielsen was a faculty member and assistant vice chancellor for health and public policy at the University of Kansas Medical Center, and served as the first Chair of the Kansas Health Policy Authority Board. Dr. Nielsen holds a doctorate in health policy and management from the John Hopkins School of Public Health (Phi Beta Kappa), in addition to a master's degree in public health from George Washington University, and a bachelor of science in biology and psychology from Briar Cliff College in Sioux City, Iowa.

Before coming to Kansas in 2002, Marci spent ten years in Washington DC. During consideration of comprehensive health care reform legislation in the early 1990s, she worked as a legislative assistant to then U.S. Senator Bob Kerrey, D-Nebraska. She later served for more three years as the health lobbyist and then Assistant Director of Legislation for the AFL-CIO. Other work experience includes research positions with Johns Hopkins University, George Washington University, the University of Arizona Cancer Center, as well as six years of military service with the US Army Reserves and two and half years as a Peace Corps volunteer working for the Thai Ministry of Public Health.

She and her husband have twin six year old daughters and live in Lawrence Kansas.