



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**

Ashwin Vasana, MD, PhD
Commissioner

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**NYC HEALTH COMMISSIONER DR. ASHWIN VASANA ON TENURE AT THE NYC
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

“It has truly been the honor of my lifetime to serve the city I love, where I started and raised a family for nearly 15 years, and to be your Health Commissioner, the city’s doctor to 8.3 million fellow New Yorkers. I thank Mayor Adams, Deputy Mayor Anne Williams-Isom, and the entire administration for giving me this opportunity and for the great work we have accomplished together. After nearly three years, I will be leaving my position as commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in early January 2025.

“As anyone with a family—or a chosen family—knows, you are never alone in service. My wife and three young children have served alongside me, bearing the brunt of my absence and shouldering so much. I’m grateful for their love and have chosen that now it is time to support them and their wellbeing. While this was a hard decision, it was the right one for me and my family. I also look forward to continuing my clinical work and teaching, while supporting initiatives to advance health, equity, and access across this city and this nation.

“From day one, I have made focus, ambition, and integrity a key part of my leadership. The state of the department and of our public health system is strong. I’m deeply confident that we have put in place critical initiatives to benefit New Yorkers, and we have the right team to continue this important work and keep us safe and healthy for years and generations to come.

“When I was appointed as New York City Health Commissioner in December 2021, the Omicron variant of COVID-19 was raging, infecting tens of thousands, taking the lives of New Yorkers, and it was not clear what 2022 had in store for us, including an mpox outbreak followed by New York’s first case of polio in a decade, and all while COVID-19 continued to linger and embed itself in our city.

“At the Department of Health, we took those challenges—and so many others—head on, even diseases that many haven’t heard of, because that is the work of preventing public health issues before they occur. We have accomplished so much in the past few years, from leading the city out of the pandemic and a period of crisis, to heralding a new era of public health. We’ve made foundational and innovative new investments in our collective health and wellbeing that range from our long-term public health agenda, [HealthyNYC](#), to the city’s [Abortion Access Hub](#) hotline, to mental health investments in 988, clubhouses and “[NYCTeenspace](#),” a free text, call, or chat counseling service for teens between 13-17 years old, that is already serving thousands of New York City teens. Alongside our work to protect young people from the harmful effects of social media, as well as relieve New Yorkers [of \\$2 billion in medical debt](#), and our behind the

scenes [investments in our data systems](#) and worksite wellness, I am so proud of what we have accomplished together.

“Serving as the New York City Health Commissioner is perhaps the best job anywhere in public health. It’s a privilege that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

“The nearly 7,000 staff at the Department of Health are the best public health workers in the world. It’s been an honor to be a steward of their trust, and an even bigger honor to call them colleagues and friends. I know they will continue to fight for health, equity, and justice for all New Yorkers.

“Together, we’ve reshaped public health in New York City for the future.”

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