



Biographical Statement
Dr. Ngozi Ezike,
Director,
Illinois Department of Public Health

Dr. Ngozi Ezike is the Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the first Black woman appointed to lead the 143-year old state agency. During her tenure with IDPH, she has gained recognition as she leads the state through the COVID-19 pandemic, providing televised daily updates and guidance for Illinoisans, and collaborating with businesses, community organizations and healthcare institutions. Under her leadership, Illinois has successfully vaccinated more than 70% of its population, developed rapid-response, in-school COVID-19 testing protocols, and established a voluntary Ambassador program composed of more than 1,200 state residents who take the messages of COVID awareness and good health to their respective communities.

Dr. Ezike is the former medical director at the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center, and a nationally recognized expert in the area of healthcare within the juvenile detention and justice systems. Prior to this, Dr. Ezike worked for Cook County Health (CCH), the hospital and healthcare system addressing the needs of the residents of Cook County, for more than 15 years. In that capacity, she served as the Austin Health Center medical director, where she actively engaged with the community on a variety of health initiatives. She also has delivered inpatient care at Stroger Hospital and primary and preventive care in community and school-based clinics.

A board-certified internist and pediatrician, Dr. Ezike is a graduate of Harvard University and the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine. She is a Certified Correctional Health Professional and Diplomate of both the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Board of Pediatrics. She is also an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Rush Medical College.

She is the recipient of numerous awards including honorary doctorates from Southern Illinois University, Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, and Knox College, the University of St. Francis' Sister Clare of Assisi Award, and the 2020 Excellence in Public Service Award from the Motorola Solutions Foundation.

An advocate for maintaining work-life balance, particularly in challenging times, Dr. Ezike is an avid tennis player and reader, and is fluent in Spanish and French.