

Biographical Note

Dr. Carissa F. Etienne

Dr. Carissa F. Etienne was elected Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) by the Member States of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on 19 September 2012 and will begin her five-year term on 1 February 2013. From March 2008 until 1 November 2012, Dr. Etienne served as Assistant Director-General for Health Systems and Services at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. Prior to that, as Assistant Director of PASB from July 2003 to February 2008, she led five technical areas: Health Systems and Services; Technology, Health Care and Research; Health Surveillance and Disease Management; Family and Community Health; and Sustainable Development and Environmental Health.

During her tenures at WHO and PAHO, Dr. Etienne led the efforts to renew primary health care and to strengthen health systems based on primary health care, promoting integration and improved functioning of health systems. She has also spearheaded policy directions for reducing health inequalities and advancing health for all through universal coverage, people-centered care, the integration of health into broader public policies, and inclusive and participatory health leadership.

The World Health Report 2010 - Health systems financing: the path to universal coverage was produced under the direction of Dr. Etienne and WHO's Deputy Director-General. The report is recognized worldwide for providing an agenda for action by countries at all stages of development to move more quickly and in a sustainable manner towards universal coverage, while proposing ways in which the international community can better support efforts to achieve universal coverage and improve health outcomes. Dr. Etienne has also led the WHO global agenda to support universal access to safe and efficacious medical products and the development of a global code of practice for the international recruitment of health personnel. She also chaired the International Health Partnership (IHP+) initiative, which seeks to commit partners to work together and put into practice international principles for effective aid and development cooperation in the health sector.

In her native Dominica, Dr. Etienne began her career as a medical officer at the Princess Margaret Hospital, where she eventually became the Chief Medical Officer. She has also served in other high-level posts in Dominica, including Coordinator of the National AIDS Program, Disaster Coordinator for the Ministry of Health, Chair of the National Advisory Council for HIV/AIDS, and Director of Primary Health Care Services.

Dr. Etienne received her medical degree (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery - MBBS) from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica, and her Master in Science (MSc) in Community Health in developing countries from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London.