

Letter given to WABE from Dr. Patrice Harris, director of Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness.

I do recall some discussion with CDC about talking with the Board of Commissioners about inefficiencies in County processes and the challenges they presented for our timely compliance. A former CDC staffer also told me that, in his opinion, that request was highly unusual. I didn't think that was the appropriate way to handle the situation. I also worried that it might look like I had put the CDC up to it. I felt it would make more sense for me to work through the chain of command to build a case for making the needed changes and that I would work internally to institute changes and that's what I've been trying to do and/or schedule a meeting with the County Manager—staff to staff communication.

I think the changes we made last year by bringing Leisha McKinley Beach on board as the Health Program Administrator as well as having her report directly to me since April and the biweekly grants management meetings with Purchasing, Finance, Personnel and Program staff are testament to my proactive efforts and the County's proactive efforts to address the problems. Certainly if I had to do it all over again I would be more aggressive, but hindsight is always 20/20. Nevertheless, I did and do believe that since the beginning of the year we have made important progress in improving the processes and we are on the right track now.

To your inquiry re my demeanor, first, let me say that I never discount anyone's perception of interaction. What I can always accurately speak truth to is my intent in any interchange. I am upfront, direct and responsive. In fact, recently someone at the County said to me, "Dr. Harris, your reputation for responsiveness precedes you."

I consider myself collaborative, collegial, cordial and service oriented. Those are the principles that drive the culture on the Health Services' Teams. Also attached is a document that Senior Leadership on my team has adopted to guide our interactions and work with one another.