

WASHINGTON

Umair Shah, MD, MPH

Secretary of Health

Washington State Department of Health



Umair A. Shah is a nationally recognized public health expert and healthcare executive appointed Secretary of Health for Washington State in 2020. He is the first physician of South Asian descent to serve in this leadership role in Washington's history. As Secretary, Dr. Shah has not only been responsible for the health and well-being of the 8 million residents of the State, but he has also led a team of 3,000 health professionals and overseen a biannual budget of \$3 billion. Under his leadership, the department has transformed into an award-winning agency with Equity, Innovation, and Engagement as its cornerstone values.



Dr. Shah was previously the Executive Director of Harris County Public Health serving the 3rd largest County in the United States, responding to numerous large-scale emergencies, including N1H1, Ebola, Zika, hurricane and tropical storms, chemical events and the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, Dr. Shah served as an emergency department attending physician at Michael DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center for over twenty years.

Over his career, Dr. Shah has received recognition for public service, teaching, innovation, and clinical care, including the American Public Health Association's prestigious Roemer Prize in 2019. He has held leadership positions with respected entities like the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Trust for America's Health; Network for Public Health Law; Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute; the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials; and the National Association of County and City Health Officials, where he previously served as president.

Member Bio

Dr. Shah earned his BA (philosophy) from Vanderbilt University; his MD from the University of Toledo Health Science Center; and completed an Internal Medicine Residency, Primary Care/General Medicine Fellowship, and MPH (management), at the University of Texas Health Science Center (UTHSC). He completed an international health policy internship at the World Health Organization headquarters in Switzerland and remains on faculty at UTHSC, Baylor College of Medicine, and the University of Washington. Throughout his extensive career, he has effectively worked within federal, state, and local health systems across states with varying political affiliations, including in both Republican and Democratic states.

