

**Department of Homeland Security**  
Office of Health Affairs

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**Dr. Alexander G. Garza**

Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer



Dr. Alexander Garza is the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer. Appointed by President Obama and confirmed by the Senate in 2009, Dr. Garza is the principal advisor to Secretary Napolitano on all issues involving health and bioterrorism. In this role, he manages DHS' medical and health security matters, oversees the health aspects of contingency planning for all chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards, and leads a coordinated effort to ensure that DHS is prepared to respond to biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction. Dr. Garza additionally leads the oversight of operational medical policy for the Department's EMS assets including over 3,500 Emergency Medical Technicians and paramedics.

In addition, in May 2010, President Obama appointed Dr. Garza to serve as a member of the Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues. This Commission advises the President on bioethical issues that may emerge from advances in medicine and related areas of science and technology.

Dr. Garza spent 13 years as a practicing emergency physician, educator, researcher, and EMS administrator. Dr. Garza was a battalion surgeon and public health team chief during Operation Flintlock in Dakar, Senegal, and was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He has been awarded numerous decorations, including the Bronze Star and Combat Action badge and continues to serve in the US Army Reserves.

Dr. Garza holds a medical degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine, a Masters in Public Health from the Saint Louis University School of Public Health and is Board certified in Emergency Medicine. He is the author of numerous articles and has lectured nationally and internationally about emergency medicine, disaster medicine, and bioterrorism.