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Obama Selects Health Policy Advocate as Surgeon General

By STEVE KENNY

WASHINGTON — President Obama nominated Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, an early supporter and grass-roots advocate for the Affordable Care Act, as [surgeon general](#) on Thursday.

Dr. Murthy, 36, is a founder and the president of [Doctors for America](#), a group that campaigned for the [health care law](#) before Congress passed it in 2010 and that was an outgrowth of Doctors for Obama, which worked to help elect the president in 2008. He is a doctor at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston and an instructor at Harvard Medical School.

At a Rose Garden event in October 2009, held as the Senate Finance Committee was set to vote on the legislation, [Dr. Murthy said](#) that Mr. Obama “understands that the current system isn’t working for patients, but it’s also not working for doctors.”

Jay Carney, the White House spokesman, said Thursday in a statement that Dr. Murthy “will be a powerful messenger” on health policy. His nomination is subject to Senate approval.

Last year, he was the co-author of an article for The New Republic responding to criticism of the health care law and citing its support among doctors, although it acknowledged qualms among them. “Doctors will support the new law to the extent that it becomes visible in their everyday lives, and make these lives better,” it said.

He also has been a leader in [H.I.V.](#) prevention and AIDS education in both the United States and India. In 1995, he helped found Visions, a nonprofit AIDS and H.I.V. education group, and has been both its president and its chairman of the board.

Dr. Murthy received his medical degree from Yale and a bachelor of arts degree in biochemical sciences from Harvard. He also earned an M.B.A. from Yale.

Mr. Obama’s first surgeon general, Dr. [Regina Benjamin](#), left in July to return to her hometown, where she founded in Bayou La Batre, Ala. Dr. [Boris D. Lushniak](#), a rear admiral, has been acting surgeon general.



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