Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee: Guidance and Leadership on American Indian and Alaska Native Health

The Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee provides leadership, guidance, and recommendations to the Indian Health Service (IHS) and other government agencies on issues related to diabetes and related chronic health conditions among American Indians and Alaska Natives.

The creation of the Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee

The Director of the IHS established the Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee in 1998 in response to the successful partnership between IHS and Tribal Leaders in establishing the process for distributing the *Special Diabetes Program for Indians* funds. By creating this committee, the Director sought to foster an ongoing dialogue between IHS and Tribal leadership on matters related to diabetes, chronic health conditions, and other health issues in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee is an important outcome of the *Special Diabetes Program for Indians* and demonstrates the true spirit of ongoing partnership between Tribal and Indian Health Service leadership.

The role of the Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee

As an advisory body to the IHS Director, the Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee:

- Makes recommendations on diabetes-related policy and advocacy issues.
- Provides advice and guidance to ensure that appropriate cultural traditions and values are incorporated in program development, research, and community-based activities.
- Offers guidance to other organizations—such as federal agencies and organizations, states, Tribal epidemiology centers, institutions of higher learning, and private health organizations—on how they can help address diabetes and related chronic health conditions among American Indians and Alaska Natives.
- Serves as a Tribal advisory committee to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Native Diabetes Wellness Program.

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Membership of the Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee

The Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee includes 18 members:

- One elected or appointed Tribal official (and alternate) from each of the 12 IHS administrative areas (voting members).
- One IHS representative (voting member).
- One representative (and alternate) from each of the following organizations (non-voting members):
  - National Indian Health Board
  - National Congress of American Indians
  - Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee
  - Direct Service Tribes

Buford Rolin of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians is the current Chair. Alvin Windy Boy Sr., of the Chippewa Cree Tribe was the first Chair of the Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee.

"It's been wonderful to see the progress we have made in diabetes treatment and prevention with the resources from the Special Diabetes Program for Indians. We are teaching our families how important it is to address the diabetes epidemic."
—Buford Rolin, Chair
Tribal Leaders
Diabetes Committee

Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee contact information

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