



APR 23 1996

TO: Self-Governance Tribes

FROM: Director

SUBJECT: Self-Governance Advisory Committee

During the past year, Self-Governance Tribes have recommended the establishment of a Self-Governance Advisory Committee. I supported this recommendation and believed it should be implemented. Therefore, members of my staff worked with representatives from several Self-Governance Tribes to draft guidelines to establish a Self-Governance Advisory Committee.

After review by self-governance tribes and the Indian Health Service (IHS) Area Offices, the draft guidelines to establish a Self-Governance Advisory Committee were finalized. Those guidelines provide advocacy and policy guidance for implementation of the self-governance initiative. As stated in the guideline's purpose: "This Advisory Committee will: (1) represent Self-Governance Tribes by acting on their behalf to clarify issues that affect all compacting tribes specific to issues affecting the delivery of health care for American Indian and Alaska Natives; (2) confer, discuss, and come to consensus on specific self-governance issues; and (3) provide verbal and written advise about self-governance issues to the Director, IHS, and the Director, Office of Tribal Self-Governance.

The guidelines specify the key areas in which the Advisory Committee will provide advice and identify the membership of the Committee. The guidelines are attached for your information and use.

I look forward to working with the Self-Governance Advisory Committee in the coming months and I believe that we can make a difference in the implementation of this important initiative.

Michael H. Trujillo, M.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Surgeon General

Attachment

SELF-GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

I. BACKGROUND

Since 1993, Self-Governance has been operating under demonstration project authority within the Indian Health Service (IHS). During the past 3 years of implementation, Tribal governments participating in this historic initiative have successfully exhibited their ability to control and decide how to best use the Federal resources made available to Tribal communities and delivery of services to meet the needs of their community based upon Tribally-determined priorities.

Self-Governance remains a Tribally-driven initiative. More importantly, Self-Governance fosters the shaping of a "new Partnership" between Indian Tribes and the United States (U.S.) in their government-to-government relationship. This initiative provides administratively, the opportunity for Tribal governments to exercise their sovereignty with minimal Federal intrusion and involvement.

II. PURPOSE

The Self-Governance Advisory Committee will provide advocacy and policy guidance for implementation of this initiative within IHS. This Advisory Committee will: (1) represent Self-Governance Tribes by acting on their behalf, to clarify issues that affect all compacting Tribes specific to issues affecting the delivery of health care for American Indians and Alaska Natives; (2) confer, discuss and come to consensus on specific self-governance issues; and (3) provide verbal and written advice about self-governance issues to the Director, IHS, and the Director, Office of Tribal Self-Governance (OTSG).

III. ACTIVITIES

The Self-Governance Advisory Committee shall provide advice in the following key areas:

- Advocate for discussion by Self-Governance Tribes and input to the U.S. Government before final decisions are made on Self-Governance policy issues that advance tribal self-governance objectives within the Department of Health and Human Services.
- As requested by the Director, IHS, attend meetings as self-governance issues are discussed (e.g. CAAD and/or ELG).
- Review, evaluate, and recommend refinements for any directive documents (e.g. negotiations handbook, self-governance circulars, etc.) that define the relationship between Tribes and the U.S. Government.

- Provide input to all workgroups addressing self-governance issues. Clearly articulate the issues of concern to compacting Tribes and serve the needs of compacting Tribes to the utmost with regard to such issues.
- Promote the wishes and desires of all compacting Tribes to provide quality health care that adequately meets the needs of tribal people.
- Provide a forum to exchange ideas specific to self-governance issues and discussion of what works and what does not work at the local level.
- Provide recommendations for the simplification and development of budgetary line items and other budgetary issues (e.g., establishment of Tribal Self-Governance recurring funding).
- Recommend to the Director, IHS, and the Director, OTSG, annual (OTSG) program objectives and priorities. Recommend a methodology to monitor and evaluate progress on specific (OTSG) objectives and priorities.
- Participate in the review of work conducted by the OTSG and ad hoc workgroups that may be appointed to assist the OTSG.
- Recommend candidates from tribal programs to participate on ad hoc workgroups appointed to address specific self-governance issues.
- As requested by the Director, IHS, and the Director, OTSG, assist with meetings with Self-Governance Tribes as well as congressional committees and Government agencies.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

The universe of Self-Governance Tribes will change from year to year as additional tribes have an opportunity to compact. Tribes electing to compact will vary in several important factors including the size of the Tribe. Small Tribes have 449 or fewer members, medium-sized Tribes have between 500 and 4,999 members, and large Tribes have 5,000 or more members. Additionally, Tribes electing to compact may vary in the type and number of services compacted. The Self-Governance Advisory Committee should be large enough to be representative of the full universe of compacting Tribes and small enough to convene with some regularity and reach agreement about critical issues.

- A. Representation: The Self-Governance Advisory Committee shall include 9 representatives from Self-Governance Tribes.

Regardless of whether a Tribe compacts alone or as part of a group, for purposes of membership on this Advisory Committee, each Tribe should be considered a single unit. Regardless of the type and number of services compacted, a tribe that compacts for one or more services is eligible to be considered for representation on the advisory group.

To the extent possible, membership from compacting Tribes should reflect the profile of the group of compacting Tribes (e.g., the number of Advisory Committee members selected from small tribes should reflect the proportion of compacting Tribes that have 499 or fewer members).

- B. Appointments: Continuity in Advisory Committee membership is desirable to support group development and effectiveness. Appointments for 1, 2, or 3 year terms will permit the group to retain experience and knowledge while providing annual opportunities to modify group membership and ensure representation of the full universe of Self-Governance Tribes.

Three members of the advisory committee shall be appointed to serve through December 31, 1996. Three shall be appointed to serve through December 31, 1997, and 3 shall be appointed to service through December 31, 1998.

Upon completion of their appointment, members should wait a minimum of 1 year before being considered for reappointment.