



Indian Health Service Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: (301) 443-3593, FAX (301) 443-0507

Charles W. Grim, D.D.S., M.H.S.A. Confirmed as Seventh Director of the Indian Health Service

Charles W. Grim, D.D.S., M.H.S.A., a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, and a Rear Admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) has been confirmed as the seventh director of the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Dr. Grim was nominated by President George W. Bush and supported by tribal governments across the nation. He was unanimously confirmed by the full Senate on July 16, 2003.

“Since his appointment as Interim Director last August, Dr. Grim has demonstrated his ability as a compassionate leader, effective manager, and worthy advocate for Indian health programs,” stated HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson. “Dr. Grim has the background and experience to lead the Indian Health Service and serve the American Indian and Alaska Native people.”

As the IHS Director, Dr. Grim will administer a nationwide multi-billion dollar health care delivery program composed of 12 administrative Area (regional) Offices, which oversee local hospitals and clinics, and a workforce of more than 15,000 employees. The IHS is responsible for providing preventive, curative, and community health care services to approximately 1.6 million of the nation's 2.6 million American Indians and Alaska Natives through a nationwide network of 49 hospitals, 269 health centers, 176 Alaska village clinics, and 133 health stations. The IHS is the principal federal health care provider and health advocate for American Indian and Alaska Native people.

“The challenge of improving the health status of American Indians and Alaska Natives and the rest of the nation will be addressed by focusing on health promotion and disease prevention, and through strengthening the infrastructure of the Indian health system of IHS, tribal, and urban Indian programs. Also, I will strive to ensure that the IHS continues to be an organization that is very sensitive to the cultural beliefs and traditions in the communities where we serve,” stated Dr. Grim. “I will remain committed to consultation with Tribes and tribal organizations, as is the Department. The greater involvement of Indian Tribes and Indian people in the decisions affecting their health has helped produce significant health improvement in their communities.”

Dr. Grim graduated from the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry in 1983 and began his career with the IHS in 1983 at the Indian health center in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. He subsequently held various positions at the field and Area levels. Prior to serving as the interim IHS Director, Dr. Grim served as the Oklahoma City Area Director, managing a comprehensive program that provides health services to the largest IHS user population, more than 280,000 American Indians comprising 37 Tribes.

In addition to his dentistry degree, Dr. Grim also has a master's degree in health services administration from the University of Michigan. Among Dr. Grim's honors and awards are the USPHS Commendation Medal, Outstanding Unit Citation, the IHS Outstanding Management and Superior Service Award, and the USPHS Jack D. Robertson Award, which is given to a senior dental officer who demonstrates outstanding leadership and commitment to the organization. Dr. Grim was appointed to the Commissioned Corps of the USPHS in July 1983.

A copy of the Statement by HHS Secretary Thompson on the confirmation of Dr. Grim is available through this link to the news release section of the Department of Health and Human Services website:

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2003pres/20030717.html>

A copy of Dr. Grim's biography is available at <http://www.ihs.gov/PublicInfo/PublicAffairs/Bios/Grim-Director.pdf>. A copy of Dr. Grim's confirmation hearing testimony is available at

<http://www.ihs.gov/PublicInfo/PublicAffairs/Director>



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