



MAR 19 2010

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing to inform you that the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) requests our support for a study on the Indian Health Service's Contract Health Services (CHS) program. An independent nonpartisan agency working for Congress, the GAO helps agencies improve their performance and ensures their accountability by determining whether Federal funds are being spent efficiently and effectively and by reporting how well government agencies meet their program and policy objectives. The GAO also advises Congress and the heads of executive agencies about ways to improve Federal programs.

In studying Federal funding levels for the CHS program, GAO will examine how the Indian Health Service (IHS) determines the number of deferred or denied CHS services and the estimated funding amount for these services. Additionally, GAO plans to independently determine the number of deferrals and denials for IHS- and tribally-administered CHS programs in fiscal year 2009, estimating the funding amount that would have been necessary to purchase these services. The GAO will soon send tribally-administered CHS programs a data request for recorded information on deferred, denied, and unfunded CHS services and for the estimated cost for those services.

Thank you for your input on the CHS program and for your participation in GAO's study, ensuring a more accurate and comprehensive analysis of deferred and denied CHS services and payment claims. If you have any questions for GAO, please contact Mr. Michael Weahkee, IHS Liaison to GAO, at (301) 443-2650 or michael.weahkee@ihs.gov. If you have any questions for IHS, please contact Mr. Carl Harper at (301) 443-1553 or carl.harper@ihs.gov.

Sincerely,

/Yvette Roubideaux/

Yvette Roubideaux, M.D., M.P.H.
Director