



SEP 5 2017

Dear Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am pleased to inform you that the Indian Health Service (IHS) has released a 2017-2021 Strategic Plan for the Office of Urban Indian Health Programs (OUIHP). This project was requested by Congress in the 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act, Pub. L. No. 114-113, 129 Stat. 2242, 2568 (2015). The IHS contracted with the National Academy of Public Administration to conduct extensive outreach to develop the Strategic Plan and conferred with IHS, Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs), the National Indian Health Board, the National Council of Urban Indian Health, congressional staff, and other government agencies. The Strategic Plan was developed around several guiding principles and will be used to guide the work of the OUIHP, Urban Area Coordinators, and UIOs participating in the program.

Throughout 2016, several confer sessions and outreach efforts identified an array of important goals and objectives for Urban Indian health. In addition, these meetings identified the challenges UIOs face in constraining their ability to effectively deliver, improve, or expand services. The overall input helped to share the goals, objectives and strategies of the Strategic Plan. The goals of the Strategic Plan are twofold:

- To support currently IHS-funded UIOs in their efforts to address the key challenges they identified for improving and expanding their capacity to provide access to care for Urban Indians.
- To increase the administrative capacity of the OUIHP.

The Strategic Plan includes objectives and strategies to address the goals that: (a) stakeholders commonly identified as most important to the performance of the IHS mission with regard to Urban Indian health; and (b) that IHS, through OUIHP, has the authority and resources to address, at least in part, within a five-year period.

The IHS policy on Conferring with UIOs and the Strategic Plan assist us to increase access to culturally competent quality care for the American Indian and Alaska Native population who reside in urban areas. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Raho Ortiz, Acting Director, OUIHP by telephone at (301) 443-4680 or by e-mail at Raho.Ortiz@ihs.gov.

Sincerely,

/Michael D. Weahkee/

RADM Michael D. Weahkee, MBA, MHS
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Enclosure