



**Talking Points for RADM Chris Buchanan
Choctaw Nation Regional Medical Clinic Opening
Tuesday, February 21, 2017, 10 a.m. | Durant, OK**

Remarks as prepared

- Good morning and it is a pleasure to join you here today at the grand opening of the Choctaw Nation Regional Medical Clinic.
- I'm RADM Chris Buchanan and acting director of the Indian Health Service. I'm honored to be here today with all of you to celebrate this occasion.
- I'd like to recognize the following:
 - Chief Gary Batton
 - Assistant Chief Jack Austin Jr.
 - All Choctaw Council and tribal members in attendance
- I also have several IHS colleagues with me today:
 - RADM Kevin Meeks, our Oklahoma City Area Director and Acting Deputy Director for Field Operations
 - Ben Smith, our Deputy Director for Intergovernmental Affairs
 - RADM Kelly Taylor, our acting Chief of Staff and Choctaw Nation tribal member
 - Gary Hartz, Director of the Office of Environmental Health and Engineering
 - Along with several Oklahoma City Area Office staff members
- It certainly takes many people to bring a vision to fruition. The architects, construction workers, and finally the staff that will bring life to this building.
- The mission of the Indian Health Service is one that I hold in high esteem. It states that it is to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest level.
- Your new facility will support and work to achieve these outcomes because you will have the first tribal facility that will offer an outpatient ambulatory surgery center. Congratulations on this important distinction.
- This facility will provide a full range of comprehensive health care and preventive services that are culturally sensitive and that benefit your tribal members.

- It really is a treat to be able to celebrate with our Indian health partners, IHS Area staff, tribal leadership, and medical professionals who have worked hard to make this happen.
- The timeline for this Joint Venture Construction Program project is impressive:
 - Program Justification Document completed on June 3, 2015
 - Program of Operation completed on June 3, 2015
 - Joint Venture Agreement signed on June 5, 2015
- As a Regional Ambulatory Health Care Facility, this 143,000 square foot facility is designed to serve 7,050 users and an expected 57,200 outpatient visits.
- This accomplishment is truly admirable and a model to others on what can be achieved through strengthening IHS and tribal partnerships.
- The IHS looks forward to a continued partnership with the Choctaw Nation as you work to promote healthy lives for all Choctaw citizens. I can assure you that the IHS remains committed to fulfilling our mission and creating a culture of quality, leadership and accountability.
- IHS is committed to working with tribes to provide the best care for patients.
- We look forward to our continued work to ensure quality health care is delivered consistently across all facilities in the Indian health system.
- We are working to infuse quality into everything we do.
- Through sustained effort over time working side-by-side with our tribal partners, like yourselves, we will be able to achieve real and sustainable change to transform health care for American Indians and Alaska Natives across the country.
- On behalf of the Indian Health Service, I want to thank you, again, for inviting me to share in this special occasion with the Choctaw Nation.