TRIBAL LEADERS CACUSUS NOTES

Level of Need Funded Regional Forum--Los Vegas, Nevada
December 19, 2000

Chairman Dennis Smith of Duck Valley Piaute Tribe of Nevada opened the meeting. An agenda was agreed to as follows: 1) Presentation by Rock Boy Chippaw a Cree Tribal Health Program on LNF formula and discussion. 2) Open comment period on LNF Methodology3) Reservation of some time to talk about areas of common support.

A power point presentation, which had been prepared by Rock Boy for the Aberdeen Area Tribal Chairman's Association, was given in its shortened form. The explanation of the LNF formula by the Rock Boy Health Staff demonstrated a full understanding of the Indian Health Care Improvement Fund Formula and replicated IHS findings. Additionally it identified a possible flaw in the data used to represent their level of available funding. It appears that Area Office and Headquarters Tribal Share amounts may have been doubled counted in the assessment of available funding. They were opposed to any formula approach to IHS funding that relied on data that had not been verified by the Tribes.

All necessary information is not getting to Tribes.
Identification of Operating Units needs to be reviewed. (Alaska single unit)
IHS needs to be accountable and show responsibility to Tribes
We all have unmet needs
This pot of money is directed to the most under-funded
New appropriations are need for equity in heath care funding
All data needed is not available
Lots of Indian people are not being counted because services for them are not available.
Congress directed the IHS to use the LNF formula how did they make this decision
We need to educate Congress and the new Administration
We should respect all
Government has treaty obligations
Tribes should come together and advocate for 100% funding over the next few years
We need to remind Congress of the Trust Responsibility

Rock Boy Chippewa Cree Tribe restated the Aberdeen Area Tribal Leaders resolution of non-support for the Level of Need Methodology

Porch Creek made a clarification that Tribal support of the LNF Methodology would not automatically result in a $300 million funding increase to the IHS Budget.

USET: LNF formula should not include Contract Support Costs as an available resource because it disadvantages contracting and compacting tribes.

Lone Pine Tribe of Piautes and Shashone provided a brief review of the IHS budget development process and the 18 Billion Tribal Needs Budget.

To prevent the use of inaccurate data in the IHCIA distribution formula each Area Office should send out the cross walk of available resources for review by each Tribe before it is sent to Rockville for inclusion in the IHCIF Formula.

The recent Boot Camp for Area personnel was not sufficient training and they do not have a good understanding of how LNF works. They still cannot explain it to the Tribes.

We must be careful not to confuse Congress. The must be educated to understand that a Tribe can reach 100% LNF and still be under funded for other needs. LNF only looks at personal health care services. LNF does not capture all of our needs.

Navajo: The challenge is to focus on the Tribes in the greatest need
We need to go home and see who keep our active user numbers the IHS or us. We need to be responsible for our own numbers.
Areas need to provide TA to Tribes on LNF
Third party collections should be left out of the formula
We need to identify a target for IHS budget growth. LNF can help us do that.

Rural/Urban costs differences seem wrong is this a true index

Alaska: Can the other tribes in my Area keep my Tribe from participating in the Indian Health Care Improvement Fund

Lone Pine: What is our common ground. Does anybody have a better formula or idea we want to use it if there is one? Budget development has already started. Maybe we could help

Muckelshoot Tribe: Wanted to get up to speed on LNF. This has been helpful. It seems as if there is so much uncertainty that we should not use a formula approach. Third party collections should not be counted. Congress probable thinks there is no uncertainty in the data

Warm Springs In 1994 we spoke to Dr Lee and Dr Trujillio at a Regional meeting and they said then that they did not have the funds to provide the direct and CHS care that was needed even then. I try to live in the traditional way. If there were a need in Colville, or Yakama that we knew about we would divert some fund in that direction, for surely they would do the same for us.

Reno Sparks Colony: Supports incremental growth in the Indian Health Care Improvement fund. We live in the age of formulas this is not new to us. Maybe the IHCIF will grow for 10 to 40 to 80 to 160 and to 320 over time

Pawnee Business Council: We need to continue to work together. It is important that we all make this decision together.

Tohono O'ham: We need to use the formula as it is and each Tribe should work to fix or fund our own unique needs in some other way. For TO we need to focus on the cost of providing care to the undocumented who cross our reservation. If we use the formula over time we will achieve a new equilibrium.

Cherokee Nation. We should stop talking about funding those below 60% LNF and talk about funding those who are below the IHS average level of funding. If the IHS budget grew by 9% last year and medical inflation was 12% the IHS level average funding will drop by 3%.

Hoopa Tribe: It is important that we have a united front. The formula has problems but can be improved over time. The high cost of Pharmaceuticals and gasoline this past year need to be reflected in the formula. We also need a formula to identify and fund injury prevention activities.

The cost of services factor is beneficial to some tribes and not to others; just as other factors in formula help one or the other of us. In this way, through a formula, everyone's needs can be met.

Reality is incremental funding increases each year.

We should still work on the formula

We need a unified lobbying effort for a formula that takes into account our unmet needs.

Some Tribes are at the bottom of the barrel. We need to help them.

Lets address all possible flaws in the formula and then use it for all tribes.

Some of us still do not like the formula

Decision-makers about the formula contents need to be available to answer questions.

Don't throw out the formula it has great statistical information.

The formula helps lower funded Tribes improve without bring other tribes down.

The formula needs refinements instead of flawed.

Do not make the mistake of thinking that the formula is so elegant that it should not be changed.