



Uniting for One Cause

OKLAHOMA CITY AREA INTER-TRIBAL HEALTH BOARD

P.O. Box 57377 • Oklahoma City, OK 73157-7377
(405) 951-3695

- Absentee Shawnee Tribe
- Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma
- Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
- Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes
- Chickasaw Nation
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Citizen Potawatomi Nation
- Comanche Tribe of Oklahoma
- Muscogee(Creek) Nation
- The Delaware Nation
- Delaware Tribe of Indians
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe
- Fort Sill Apache Tribe
- Iowa Tribe of KS & NE
- Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
- Kaw Nation
- Kialagee Tribal Town
- Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas
- Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma
- Kickapoo Tribe of Texas
- Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma
- Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
- Modoc Tribal Council
- Osage Tribe of Indians
- Otoe-Missouria Tribe
- Ottawa Tribe
- Pawnee Nation
- Peoria Tribe
- Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma
- Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
- Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
- Sac & Fox Tribe of Missouri
- Sac & Fox Nation of Oklahoma
- Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
- Seneca-Cayuga Tribe
- Thlopthocco Tribal Town
- Tonkawa Tribe of Oklahoma
- Wichita & Affiliated Tribes
- Wyandotte Nation

June 16, 2006

Betty Gould, Regulations Officer
Division of Regulatory Affairs, Records
Access and Policy Liaison
Indian Health Service
801 Thompson Avenue, Suite 450
Rockville, MD 20852

Ms Gould:

RE: Comments on Section 506, MMA, 203-Medicare Like Rates Provision

The Oklahoma City Area Inter-Tribal Health Board (OCAITHB) appreciates the opportunity to comment of "Section 506 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 – Limitation on Charges for Services Furnished by Medicare Participating Inpatient Hospitals to Indians" as published in the Federal Register/Vol. 71 No. 82/Friday, April 28, 2006.

We support the implementation of the proposed rule. Tribally Operated Health Programs (TOHP), Area Health Boards, and the Indian Health Service, and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have all done extensive reviews of this rule and potential outcomes. They have all determined that extending Medicare Like Rates to the Indian Health Service/Tribally Operated Health Programs/ Urban Programs (I/T/U) will have a noticeable positive affect on many of the I/T/U programs which operate at approximately 50% of the Level of Need Funded presently. Many health programs have been awaiting the action.

In addition to our support of the implementation of these rules, we also request the staff from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services actively support the Medicare Like Rates provision. Because of anticipated resistance from some private sector hospitals, we ask that enforcement of these rules be a high priority.

If you have questions, please contact me at the above address, by phone at 405-951-6003, extension 103, or by email at allan.harder@ihs.gov.

Respectfully,


Allan Harder
Executive Director

CC: OCAITHB
Dr Charles Grim, Director, Indian Health Services
Don Perkins, Acting Director, Region VI, DHHS