



FEB 27 2018

Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing to provide updates on the efforts to expand the Community Health Aide Program (CHAP), which is authorized by the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25 U.S.C. § 1616l(d)). This includes: 1) formation of the CHAP Tribal Advisory Group (TAG), and 2) developing the formal policy and implementation plan.

On January 4, 2017, the Indian Health Service (IHS) issued a letter to Tribal Leaders with a report summarizing the consultation on creating a national IHS CHAP. As part of our ongoing work to assure a high performing Indian health system, the CHAP TAG will focus on addressing the next steps, which will include providing subject matter expertise, program information, innovative solutions, and advice to the IHS to establish the national CHAP.

The IHS Area Directors are soliciting nominations for one primary and one alternate to serve on the CHAP TAG. As with all advisory groups chartered by the IHS, this body will operate under the Intergovernmental Exemption of the Federal Advisory Committee Act as authorized by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (2 U.S.C. § 1534(b)). The CHAP TAG will be comprised of elected Tribal Leaders from all 12 IHS Areas. The IHS adopted the recommendation from the IHS Direct Service Tribes and Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committees to utilize their Tribal Chairs on the CHAP TAG.

The IHS will convene a two-day, in-person meeting of the CHAP TAG from March 21 - 22, 2018. Following this meeting, the elected Tribal Leaders may designate a Tribal employee to serve on specific workgroups under the CHAP TAG for programs under CHAP, such as behavioral health aides and dental health aides.

The IHS looks forward to continuing next steps to deliver quality health care to patients. IHS will continue to provide future updates of CHAP expansion efforts. If you have any questions, please contact Minette C. Galindo, Public Health Advisor, Office of Clinical and Preventive Services, IHS, by telephone at (301) 443-6680 or by e-mail at Minette.Galindo@ihs.gov

Sincerely,

/Michael D. Weahkee/

RADM Michael D. Weahkee, MBA, MHSA
Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service
Acting Director