



NOV 20 2018

Dear Arizona Tribal Leader:

I am writing to initiate Tribal Consultation on the Purchased/Referred Care (PRC) program to perform a detailed analysis of PRC implications and identify the feasibility for the entire State of Arizona to be identified as a Purchased/Referred Care Delivery Area (PRCDA). The Office of Resource Access and Partnerships (ORAP) will be leading this effort and I would like to hear your concerns and comments prior to conducting this analysis.

It has been identified that Federal PRC programs in the State of Arizona are purchasing all health care services allowed through PRC authorities, including emergent, routine, and preventive consultative services. The IHS believes this may be due to a number of reasons including the implementation of PRC Rates for physicians and non-hospital providers of supplies and services, and expansion of Medicaid coverage in the State of Arizona has increased the purchasing power of the PRC program.

The Indian Health Care Improvement Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1678(a), directs the Indian Health Service (IHS) to designate the State of Arizona as a PRCDA for the purpose of providing PRC services to members of Indian Tribes in the State of Arizona. However, § 1678(b) prohibits this designation from decreasing health care services to Indians residing on reservations in the State of Arizona.

An in depth study is necessary to specifically analyze the potential impact on purchasing health care services and the feasibility for expansion of the State of Arizona as a Statewide PRCDA for the purpose of providing health care services for members of Indian Tribes in the State. This is critical to ensure that the appropriated funds available through the PRC program are spent on the purposes authorized and will not negatively impact beneficiaries currently receiving care through the PRC program.

The IHS needs to determine with your input, whether an Arizona State-wide PRCDA is possible by conducting a study to determine the potential impact on PRC program funds and the ability to purchase comprehensive health care services for Indians throughout the State of Arizona.

Tribal Consultation on your concerns and comments on the process and analysis of the impact of designating the State of Arizona as a PRCDA will consist of the following:

- A face-to-face meeting on November 27 at the Phoenix Area Tribal Budget Formulation Meeting.
- A 30-business day comment period, beginning November 28, 2018, through January 15, 2019.

Written comments will be accepted throughout the duration of the Tribal Consultation. The deadline to provide your comments is January 15, 2019.

Please send your comments and recommendations for the study:

- By e-mail to : [consultation@ihs.gov](mailto:consultation@ihs.gov)

Subject Line: Arizona State-wide PRCDA study Tribal Consultation

- By postal mail to:

RADM Michael D. Weahkee  
Principal Deputy Director  
Indian Health Service  
5600 Fishers Lane, Mail Stop: 08E86  
Rockville, MD 20857

I look forward to hearing your comments and concerns regarding IHS conducting this study for the Arizona state-wide PRCDA. If you have questions or need additional information, please directly contact Ms. Tina Conners, Acting Director, ORAP, IHS. Ms. Conners can be reached by telephone at (301) 443-3216 or by e-mail at [tina.conners@ihs.gov](mailto:tina.conners@ihs.gov).

Sincerely,

/Michael D. Weahkee/

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