



Rear Adm. Travis Watts, PharmD Oklahoma City Area Director Indian Health Service

Rear Adm. Travis Watts, PharmD, a member of the Choctaw Nation, is the director of the Oklahoma City Area Indian Health Service. The IHS, an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, is the principal federal health care advocate and provider of health care services for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

As the Oklahoma City Area director, Watts is responsible for the provision of comprehensive health care services to one of the largest and most diverse service populations in IHS. The Oklahoma City Area serves over 400,000 patients annually and is home to 43 Tribal nations in the states of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas. The Oklahoma City Area Indian health system provides direct, preventive, and contract health care services through a successful collaboration of over 60 Tribal, urban, and federally operated facilities, including eight hospitals. Watts previously served as acting director of field operations for the Oklahoma City Area, where he oversaw the area's 11 federally managed facilities.

He began his career as a U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps officer in 1989, as a junior commissioned officer student training extern at the Clinton Indian Hospital. From 1990 to 2010, Watts served in various management, operations, and clinical positions in the IHS. In 2010, he was selected as the SE Regional Commissioned Corps Liaison, providing personnel services to over 300 officers assigned to the Oklahoma City, Nashville, and Albuquerque Areas. Watts is the current chair of the Oklahoma City Area Governing Board, Ad-Hoc member of the Southern Plains Tribal Health Board and has served on several PHS boards associated with recruitment, policy and promotion during his 31-year tenure.

During his career, Watts has served as a branch president of the Commissioned Officer Association, chairman and coordinator of multiple Commissioned Officer Awards Committees, co-chairman of the Oklahoma City Area Institutional Review Board, led agency billet transformation efforts, and served on the agency's National Pharmacy Council. He provided leadership and was on the original agency team that developed and initiated what is now the National Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee, IHS PGY-1 Pharmacy Residency Programs, and the National Clinical Pharmacy Specialist Program. Watts initiated one of the IHS' first national Pharmacy-Based Anticoagulation Training Programs, training hundreds of health care professionals to provide care that optimized medication therapy, ensuring optimal outcomes in the area of anticoagulation. He also pioneered partnerships between the University of Oklahoma and Southwestern Oklahoma State University, developing enhanced clinical rotation sites for pharmacy students.

Watts holds a bachelor's degree in pharmacy from Southwestern Oklahoma State University and a doctorate in clinical pharmacy from the University of Oklahoma. He completed an American Society of Health-System Pharmacists accredited residency in primary care through the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.