



FROM THE DESK OF THE BEMIDJI IHS AREA DIRECTOR

Fall 2012

I have had the pleasure of meeting with a number of you this past month (MAST and United Tribes) and hope to see you again at the upcoming annual ITU meeting. In addition, I hope to schedule meetings with all Tribes over the next year to discuss health programming, issues and concerns. I want to thank Sault Ste. Marie Tribal Council members for sharing some time with me during my recent trip to Michigan.

Fall has been a very busy time for all of us. Let me share some of the IHS activities that have occurred for health in the Bemidji Area.

**HEALTH BOARD:** At the MAST meeting on October 30, 2012, bylaws for an Area Health Board were approved and the Board members appointed were: Michigan- Phyllis Davis and Carol LaPointe; Minnesota- Sam Moose and Carrie Jones or designee; Wisconsin - Melinda Danforth and Randy Samuelson. This group is charged with development and implementation of the Board. The Area looks forward to working with the Health Board; this will be discussed along with the future of the Tribal Advisory Board during the upcoming ITU meeting.

**BUDGET FOR FY'13:** We are under a continuing resolution for FY'13 through March 31, 2012. Funds have been distributed to programs with signed contracts or compacts. We will be seeking Tribal input on potential budget reductions in FY'13 during the FY'15 Budget Formulation session (November 27, 2012).

**AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA):** The Area Office continues to work with the ITU on issues regarding implementation of the ACA. The Area sponsored Mim Dixon as a trainer for the November 8, 2012 United Tribes meeting in Sault Ste. Marie, MI and will sponsor a two day training as part of the upcoming ITU meeting. In addition, we have recruited three trainee/trainers from the Area who will participate in what is being called "Tribal Education and Outreach University" sponsored through the Tribal Education and Outreach Consortium (TEOC). These folks will be our Trainees in the Bemidji Area this next year. That training will begin November 29<sup>th</sup> at the ITU meeting.

**PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE:** Region V SAMHSA sponsors a monthly call to continue ongoing support by the agencies on this important issue. Call participation continues to grow as ITU programs present current programming and practice. There is a lot of great discussion and sharing of ideas. The next call is December 14, 2012 at 11 AM CST. Tribes are holding community meetings for education and involvement of community members. CDR Jeff Coady, Region V SAMHSA, presented information about the problem and also the work being done at the recent MAST meeting.

**AREA ANNUAL REPORT:** The first Bemidji Area Annual Report will be mailed to you early January 2013. We will also be posting this on the Bemidji Area website which we continue to improve. If you have suggestions for improvements or changes, we would love to hear them.

**ITU MEETING:** The Area will host the annual meeting in Appleton, Wisconsin from November 27-30. Please see the attached agenda. Briefly, Budget Formulation will occur on November 27th; meeting on various health topics on November 28<sup>th</sup>; and Affordable Care Act training on November 29 and 30. This is one of two scheduled meetings the Area holds with Tribes annually, the other is the Pre-Negotiation meeting in May.

**VETERAN'S HEALTH MEETING:** On October 10, 2012, VHA Office of Rural Health and VISN 11 and 12 sponsored the second annual VA/IHS/Tribal meeting at Sault St. Marie. . A very interesting agenda topic included the demonstration of the Telemedicine units the VA widely uses. This technology offers so many opportunities for health care of our patients without having to travel long distances.

On October 9<sup>th</sup> a veterans listening session was held. It was good for us as well as the VA to hear veteran's concerns/issues.

Peter Vicaire, VA's Office of Tribal Government Relations (OTGR - Central) sends regular newsletters to Tribes in our Area, the last on November 15, 2012.

**NATIONAL ADVISORY WORKGROUP MEMBERSHIPS:** We continue to seek nominations for Tribal Representatives to the following national advisory committee positions to represent the Bemidji Area:

HHS Health Research Advisory Committee – Delegate

HHS Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Tribal Consultation Advisory Committee – Delegate and Alternate

IHS Facility Appropriations Advisory Board - Delegate

IHS National Tribal Advisory Committee on Behavioral Health - Alternate

We want to thank those leaders who represent the Bemidji Area on national workgroups (please see attached list). Also, thank you to the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe for the delicious traditional feast the night before the United Tribes meeting.

Have a happy and prosperous holiday season.

Jenny Jenkins