



Community Health Aide Program Tribal Advisory Group

Meeting Summary

Virtual Meeting

Friday, February 8, 2019

1-2 PM ET

Roll Call

Present:

Alaska: Dr. Bob Onders

Bemidji: Jennifer McCloud

California: Guadalupe Luna

Oklahoma City: Annette James, Amanda Wyatt

Phoenix: Brook Bender

Portland: John Stephens

Additional

Billings - Byron Larson

Navajo - Mae-Gilene Begay

IHS HQ

RADM Toedt

CDR Fallon

Mechelle Johnson-Webb

Jeremy Marshall

Nick Barton

Anna Johnson

Chris Halliday

Jennifer Downs

IHS Nashville: Dr. Beverly Cotton

IHS Portland: Mr. Saylor, CAPT Rudd, Jay Furtick

IHS California: Carrie Greene

CHAP TAG Transition Updates

Dr. Cotton has accepted the position of Nashville Area Director, but will continue as the Federal Co-Chair of the Community Health Aide Program Tribal Advisory Group (CHAP TAG).

Dr. Segay's term as Chair of the CHAP TAG ended in January 2019. OCPS (Office of Clinical and Preventive Services) has offered technical assistance for the TAG to convene a caucus to nominate and elect a Tribal Chair.

Minette Galindo will be on extended leave. During her absence, Jennifer Downs will serve as the CHAP TAG Secretary. Dr. Halliday will continue to work on Dental Health Aide related matters.

CHAP Policy Updates

- The latest draft of the policy was sent to the TAG in December 2018.
- On January 8th, IHS received a letter from former CHAP TAG Tribal Chair, Dr. Glorinda Segay, on behalf of the CHAP TAG outlining the group's concern regarding the plan to consult on the CHAP policy.
- The policy and Dr. Segay's letter were resent to the TAG in January.
- The IHS is seeking feedback on the policy in today's meeting.

CHAP Policy Listening Session

Dr. Cotton

Dr. Cotton stated the October 2018 email and subsequent meeting with the CHAP TAG to discuss the policy revisions resulted in the CHAP TAG requesting the issues be developed into policy language to allow the CHAP TAG to fully comment on the changes. The policy changes were broadly outlined by IHS in an email sent to the CHAP TAG on October 17, 2018. Since it was always the plan to utilize this policy as an interim policy to allow the Tribes that are ready for CHAP implementation or have already implemented their programs to negotiate with IHS for inclusion in their respective agreements, IHS planned to consult with Tribes through a Dear Tribal Leader Letter and ask the CHAP TAG to also comment on the policy. The comments received from all Tribes would then be shared with the CHAP TAG and used to move to a final interim policy. The time issue also became more urgent as a Portland Area Tribe has requested inclusion of their CHAP program in their funding agreement. IHS decided to release the interim policy for broader and CHAP TAG consultation simultaneously. The CHAP TAG sent a letter to IHS expressing concerns about the new draft and lack of CHAP TAG consultation. In hind sight, IHS has determined this was not the best way to move forward and is utilizing today's meeting to seek feedback on the policy and consultation process before we consult more broadly with Tribes.

CHAP TAG

The CHAP TAG requested an explanation of the IHS process following their submission of the draft policy. They asked why comments/explanations for IHS edits were not incorporated in the latest draft. The TAG requested an explanation of the logic, but not necessarily a redline version of the draft.

The TAG stated some draft policy statements seem to be going beyond statutory authority of IHS. They requested OGC (Office of General Council) representatives to explain their role when there is a lack of clarity in a statute regarding the feedback presented by the CHAP TAG.

OGC

OGC's role is to work as IHS counsel to advise on legal issues. OGC stated they would need to discuss the disclosure of information with their client.

Dr. Cotton

Dr. Cotton explained that OGC advises, but the responsibility of the policy is on the agency. She requested 1-2 days to include further explanation of the policy changes outside of what was sent in October. Dr. Cotton reemphasized IHS is committed to consulting with the CHAP TAG. Dr. Cotton said she would be pulling back information from an October email and add explanations where necessary. Dr. Cotton committed to develop an explanation document and send to headquarters by close of business on Monday, February 11, 2019.

CHAP TAG

The CHAP TAG agreed that a document with an explanation of policy edits would be a good way to move forward.

Dr. Cotton

Dr. Cotton acknowledged the decision to send the policy out for broader consultation and to the CHAP TAG simultaneously was a misstep, but was not intended to block transparency. She stated the agency heard the CHAP TAG expressing the policy was not ready for broader consultation and has pulled back to make sure this is not a unilateral effort. IHS will rely on CHAP TAG input and consultation for this work and is hopeful the policy will be ready for broader consultation and implementation soon.

CHAP TAG

The CHAP TAG explained the Portland Area had put efforts to implement CHAP Expansion outside of IHS and the policy is preventing those efforts.

The CHAP TAG outlined concerns around DHATs (Dental Health Aide Therapists) not being in federal sites and the lack of a Position Description. The CHAP TAG noted that a copy of a position description was sent to IHS and expressed significant concerns that this has not been previously addressed by the IHS.

The CHAP TAG expressed concern that a national certification body could potentially usurp state standards.

Dr. Cotton

Dr. Cotton explained there are some challenges outside of the control of the IHS in developing a new series for a DHAT position. She stated that at the next meeting, an explanation of the Office of Personnel Management and IHS Office of Human Resources process to allow DHATs to be hired and employed in IHS dental programs will be outlined. However, this is much more involved than simply putting together a new position description.

Next Steps

- Dr. Cotton will send the explanation document to IHS Headquarters by close of business on Monday, February 11, 2019. Headquarters will review and then send out to the CHAP TAG. The CHAP TAG should have at least one week to review.
- We will have another virtual meeting at 1pm eastern on Friday, February 22, 2019. Jennifer Downs will send an invite early next week.