



SEP 06 2001

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Indian Health Service (IHS) is pleased to join with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) in announcing the formation of a Senior Policy Workgroup to explore how American Indian and Alaska Native health priorities might best be served through intra-agency collaborations.

The IHS/CDC/ATSDR Senior Policy Workgroup will promote collaboration, coordination, and partnerships, especially in public health, among Federal, tribal, state, and local health agencies. The focus of these collaborations will be to better serve the public health infrastructure needs of tribal and urban Indian health programs so that Indian people enjoy an improved health status and live in safer and healthier communities.

To further our mutual commitment to work with tribal governments and urban Indian and tribal health organizations, the Workgroup will ask tribal leaders and tribal public health professionals to share their perspectives on how the IHS, CDC, and ATSDR partnership can contribute to serving the personal and community health needs of American Indian and Alaska Native people. The Workgroup will meet four times a year, and meeting minutes will be posted at http://www.ihs.gov/TribalLeaders/triballetters/2001_letters_page.htm. Please feel free to contact the Workgroup members for additional information and for providing your perspective on how the IHS, CDC, and ATSDR partnership can be beneficial to Indian people, their families, and communities. A list of the Workgroup members and Agency contacts is enclosed with this letter.

We are committed to working with you to assist American Indian and Alaska Native people in attaining the highest health status possible and ensuring that the health priorities of Indian country are reflected in our agencies' programs and budgets.

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