



DEC 13 2016

Indian Health Service  
Rockville MD 20857

Dear Tribal Leader:

This letter follows up to the World Café that the Indian Health Service (IHS) hosted in Phoenix, Arizona on October 9, 2016, in partnership the Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee and Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee, in addition to our honored guests from the Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee and also follows up from the October 31, 2016, letter that provided a summary report listing the ideas and recommendations generated during the World Café.

As discussed with Tribal partners during the World Café, like many rural health care systems, the IHS faces substantial challenges in terms of finding highly qualified clinical, administrative, and technical staff willing to serve in geographically-isolated locations. Throughout the host-moderated strategic session and a World Café forum, Tribal advisory committee members and other participants focused on generating short- and long-term solutions for health care workforce issues. On October 31, 2016, IHS provided a summary report of both the short-term and long-term recommendations generated during the World Café, a copy of which can be viewed at [https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/includes/themes/newihstheme/display\\_objects/documents/2016\\_Letters/56433-1SummaryReportWorldCafeWorkforceChallenges10312016.pdf](https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/includes/themes/newihstheme/display_objects/documents/2016_Letters/56433-1SummaryReportWorldCafeWorkforceChallenges10312016.pdf).

These workforce challenges will need to be addressed on many fronts, and there is no single easy fix to these long-standing issues. IHS, in collaboration with our Tribal partners and the Executive Council on Quality Care, will continue to work aggressively to address these workforce challenges. For instance, IHS has proposed a realignment of IHS headquarters that creates a new position that will focus on long-term workforce development such as improving the IHS scholarship and loan repayment programs and creating partnerships with colleges and universities, Tribal colleges, and medical schools. Tribal consultation on the proposed realignment of IHS headquarters ends January 13, 2017. Nonetheless, IHS has already begun to evaluate the impact of its scholarship and loan repayment programs, and soon IHS intends to make some important announcements regarding the scholarship and loan repayment programs that will maximize their effectiveness and work to transform these programs.

IHS will continually update the progress of the work done at the World Café and the overall efforts on workforce challenges. In follow-up to the World Café report, enclosed are two documents requested: (1) an IHS fact sheet for Tribes to illustrate the IHS hiring process and timelines, including instructions for applying for IHS jobs through the USA Jobs Web site; and (2) a fact sheet that summarizes the current partnerships with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), National Institutes of Health (NIH), and other Federal agencies to recruit health providers.

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The IHS will continue to work through Tribal advisory committees in the near future to take the next step in turning these themes and ideas into actions.

I look forward to your participation and engagement. If you have workforce-related questions, please contact Ms. Lisa Gyorda, Director, Office of Human Resources, IHS, by telephone at (301) 443-6520 or by e-mail at [lisa.gyorda@ihs.gov](mailto:lisa.gyorda@ihs.gov).

Sincerely,

/Mary Smith/

Mary Smith  
Principal Deputy Director

Enclosures