



OCT 13 2017

Dear Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing to inform you of the Indian Health Service’s (IHS) progress in formally transferring internal administration of the former National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (NIAAA) programs (former-NIAAA programs) from the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) to the IHS Office of Urban Indian Health Programs (OUIHP).

The OUIHP has actively researched the steps needed to complete the internal transfer from the ASAP to the OUIHP, and fully implement the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) at 25 U.S.C. § 1660c – *Urban NIAAA transferred programs*. Research to date has included examining historical records, obtaining information from IHS Area Offices, and meeting with IHS Headquarters Offices.

On August 15, 2016, the IHS sent a letter to Urban Indian Organization (UIO) Leaders to share that the IHS was taking steps to complete the internal transfer from the ASAP to the OUIHP. On September 5, 2017, pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, Pub. L. No. 114-113, 129 Stat. 2242, 2568 (2015), the IHS announced the release of the 2017-2021 OUIHP Strategic Plan to guide transition efforts in the former-NIAAA programs (Goal Two; Objective 2.1). IHS progress to date is consistent with the August 2016 letter and with the OUIHP Strategic Plan.

As of today, the IHS has identified six former-NIAAA programs for potential transfer.

Former-NIAAA Program	IHS Area
Ain Dah Ing, Inc.	Bemidji
American Indian Council on Alcoholism, Inc.	Bemidji
Minnesota Indian Primary Residential Treatment Center, Inc.	Bemidji
Juel Fairbanks Chemical Dependency Services	Bemidji
Native Directions, Inc.	California
Morning Star Outreach Program	Oklahoma City

Three critical steps were identified in order to complete this transfer:

- Step 1:** The first step is for the IHS to communicate with each former-NIAAA program to confirm that it is an UIO as defined by the IHCIA at 25 U.S.C. § 1603(29).
- Step 2:** Once UIO status is confirmed, the second step entails an internal transition of management of the contract funds from the ASAP to the OUIHP by key offices at the Area and IHS Headquarters level. This will authorize the OUIHP to administer the contracts of the former-NIAAA programs out of the ASAP

Step 3: The third step is to formally reprogram funds from the ASAP budget line item to the IHS Urban Indian Health budget line by key offices at the Area and IHS Headquarters level. This step will require a congressional request. The earliest possibility that the IHS could begin implementation of this change would be in fiscal year (FY) 2020.

To move forward, the OUIHP has developed an initial implementation strategy to address Steps 1 and 2 mentioned above.

Actions to implement the transition to OUIHP oversight will include the following:

- Finalize procedures and timeline for the transfer process of the former-NIAAA programs.
- Provide consistent updates to all UIOs and Area Urban Coordinators (AUCs) on monthly Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director (CEO/ED) and AUC conference calls.
- Gather necessary input to assess the needs of former-NIAAA programs in information technology (IT), reporting, and other important requirements. This will include site visits to each location.
- Render a decision after needs are assessed at each former-NIAAA program by developing a plan to address those identified needs. These efforts will be monitored and tracked by the OUIHP.
- Execute actions through continued coordination with IHS Headquarters and Area staff to develop a timeline to begin the transfer process when contracts begin a new funding cycle. This includes revising contract language to reflect UIO programs and reviewing budgets and other contracting tasks. Former-NIAAA programs may accept or propose changes to the scope of work during this period of negotiation before they sign the new contract.
- Begin orienting former-NIAAA programs about the OUIHP and the IHCIA, including reporting requirements and other important information. Provide a schedule for training sessions and webinars.
- Continue to communicate with former-NIAAA programs to answer questions and hear feedback on the transfer and services received from the OUIHP.

Based on the OUIHP's implementation plan, the IHS is taking the necessary steps to transfer administration of these programs from the ASAP to the OUIHP. Thank you for your continued support and partnership of this transfer. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Raho Ortiz, Acting Director, OUIHP, IHS, by telephone at (301) 443-4680 or at raho.ortiz@ihs.gov.

Sincerely,

/Chris Buchanan/

For RADM Michael D. Weahkee, MBA, MHSA
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