Dear Tribal Leader:

I am writing to express the Indian Health Service’s (IHS) concern about sexual abuse of minors by a former IHS physician, Dr. Stanley Patrick Weber.¹ We have heard from many who are rightfully alarmed and are questioning how the IHS is addressing the situation. Though the IHS cannot comment on the ongoing criminal cases involving Dr. Weber, we are extremely troubled by his actions and the negative impact on our patients. The IHS wants to work with our Tribal communities to prevent these actions from ever happening again.

The IHS has taken immediate steps to affirm and enhance safeguards to protect our patients, especially children. Efforts taken to date include the following:

- Reminding all IHS staff of the duty to report suspected abuse and the methods for reporting;
- Reinforcing with all staff the strict prohibitions against inappropriate contact with children, including those stated in the Indian Health Manual, Part 3, Chapter 23: Ethical and Professional Conduct of Health Care Providers;
- Reminding all IHS staff of the protections for whistleblowers who report suspicions of abuse;
- Drafting a new policy to further stress zero tolerance for abuse of children; and
- Initiating an internal patient safety medical quality assurance review.

The IHS encourages its employees, Tribal leaders, patients, family members, and others to report suspicions of abuse. Two methods for reporting suspicions of any fraud, waste, and abuse are the IHS hotline and the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General (OIG) hotline, both of which allow for anonymous reporting.

- IHS hotline: (301) 443-0658. The number is monitored Monday-Friday, and you can also leave a message. In addition, reports can be e-mailed to reportfraud@ihs.gov or submitted online at https://www.ihs.gov/reportFraud/.
- OIG hotline: (800) 447-8477.

The IHS is committed to working with all Tribes and Tribal leaders to protect the safety of our patients, especially children. Please send any suggestions for improving current practices and policies to the following address:

Principal Deputy Director  
Indian Health Service  
5600 Fishers Lane, Mail Stop: 08E86  
Rockville, MD 20857

Sincerely,

/Michael D. Weahkee/

RADM Michael D. Weahkee, MBA, MHSA  
Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service  
Principal Deputy Director