



AUG 2 2019

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

As a next step of the Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer activity related to the distribution mechanism for behavioral health initiative funding, I am writing to announce a 60-day comment period to seek your input and comments on recommendations by the Indian Health Service (IHS) National Tribal Advisory Committee on Behavioral Health (NTAC) based on the input gathered from the initial comment period that closed in August 2018.

As part of this Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer activity, I tasked the NTAC to review the input gathered from the initial comment period and to develop recommendations for the IHS to consider to address the explanatory statement in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, which encourages the IHS to transfer behavioral health initiative funding through Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act compacts and contracts (as opposed to grants) to ensure that contract support costs are authorized and payable. Since October 2018, the NTAC convened three meetings to complete this task.

On June 17, 2019, the NTAC presented its recommendations to me and senior staff in Rockville, Maryland. Attendees included leadership from other IHS Tribal advisory committees, such as the Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee and the Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee, and representatives from the National Council of Urban Indian Health and the National Indian Health Board.

I have enclosed the NTAC recommendations for your review and comment. Meeting agendas and summaries from the NTAC sessions are also available on the IHS Web site at <https://www.ihs.gov/dbh/consultationandconfer/moreinformation/>.

Written comments will be accepted by e-mail or postal mail. **The deadline to provide comments is Tuesday, October 1, 2019.**

Please send comments by E-MAIL to: [consultation@ihs.gov](mailto:consultation@ihs.gov) or [urbanconfer@ihs.gov](mailto:urbanconfer@ihs.gov)

**Subject Line: IHS Behavioral Health Funding**

Please send comments by POSTAL MAIL to: RADM Michael D. Weahkee  
Principal Deputy Director  
Indian Health Service  
5600 Fishers Lane, Mail Stop: 08E86  
Rockville, MD 20857

**Attention: IHS Behavioral Health Funding**

A Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer comment summary is provided online at [https://www.ihs.gov/sites/newsroom/themes/responsive2017/display\\_objects/documents/2018\\_Letters/Enclosure\\_BH\\_InitiativeFundingSummary\\_12112018.pdf](https://www.ihs.gov/sites/newsroom/themes/responsive2017/display_objects/documents/2018_Letters/Enclosure_BH_InitiativeFundingSummary_12112018.pdf).

I look forward to your input and comments on the NTAC recommendations.

Thank you for your support and partnership in addressing important behavioral health issues in our communities. If you have questions, please contact Ms. Michele Muir-Howard, Staff Analyst, IHS Division of Behavioral Health, by telephone at (301) 443-2038, or by e-mail at [michele.muir-howard@ihs.gov](mailto:michele.muir-howard@ihs.gov).

Sincerely,

/Michael D. Weahkee/

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

Enclosure: National Tribal Advisory Committee on Behavioral Health (NTAC)  
Recommendations