



**Remarks by IHS Great Plains Area Director James Driving Hawk
on the Accreditation Status of the Pine Ridge Hospital**

June 18, 2020

Thank you for joining us today.

Jon and I want to announce some very good news. Across the IHS Great Plains Area we have made some significant changes. Changes that are improving the quality of health care we deliver to our patients and I am very happy to share with you today that these improvements have resulted in the Pine Ridge IHS Hospital earning The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Hospital Accreditation.

In November 2019, surveyors from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services conducted a complete Conditions of Participation Survey and found the hospital to be 100% compliant. The next step in the certification process was to have a full accreditation survey by The Joint Commission. Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, we had a virtual survey in May 2020 and received full accreditation by The Joint Commission. That report was sent to CMS, and last week the Pine Ridge hospital received deemed accreditation status which allows us to bill for full hospital services.

We have applied many lessons learned along the way. We always said true and sustainable change takes time, and we are seeing the results. We saw it in December when the Rosebud IHS Hospital also achieved accreditation by The Joint Commission, and again with this announcement.

We have focused on three areas

- Commitment to Hospital Governance and oversight
- Commitment to quality leadership and Infusing quality health care into everything we do
- Improving collaboration and communication between the facility, area, headquarters and the tribe.

We have expanded leadership oversight from the Area Office to the hospital and improved staffing levels and we have increased:

- requirements for medical staff credentialing,
 - education of our staff on quality standards
- AND
- implemented new checks and balances to ensure any new issues that arise are addressed promptly.

In short, our expectations for ourselves have changed. We're holding ourselves to a higher standard. To achieve this accreditation, we didn't have to show that we met the standards at just one point in time, but that we could demonstrate continuous compliance with performance standards. This was possible because we have made meaningful and lasting changes. And we are not done. We will

continue to improve through our sustained efforts, and through investments such as a planned renovation of the Pine Ridge emergency department.

I want to conclude by saying that I am very proud of the entire team at Pine Ridge. We have some of the hospital leadership on the phone with us today to answer questions, led by Captain Jon Schuchardt, Acting CEO. He is joined by Director of Quality Commander Amanda Swallow and Clinical Director Dr. Sara Jumping Eagle. Commander Swallow and Dr. Jumping Eagle are both members of the Oglala Lakota Tribe, and we're very happy to have them on our team.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have.