



Indian Health Service Press Release

September 13, 2016
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sioux San Hospital to Focus on Urgent Care and Other Services to Improve Care Quality to Patients

As part of the Indian Health Service's broader consultation process with tribal leaders in the Great Plains Area on plans for new construction and services at the existing Sioux San Hospital in Rapid City, South Dakota, to serve patients in the safest and most efficient manner, IHS has notified area tribes that Sioux San Hospital will begin focusing its services on outpatient and urgent care starting September 20. IHS will continue to consult with tribes on what services would be of most use to the Sioux San patient population.

Sioux San Hospital will continue to treat patients in need of urgent care services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in addition to providing outpatient care services. Due to a number of factors, including the age of the Sioux San facility, we have concluded that the emergency department has certain limitations and many emergency cases must currently be transferred to another emergency department in Rapid City. To help focus services on the majority of patients seen at the hospital and ensure that all individuals receive the best possible care as quickly as possible, IHS is announcing that it has notified area tribes of the planned temporary closure of the Sioux San Hospital Emergency Department effective as of **September 20 at 8:00 AM MT**.

The change in emergency department service means that all IHS patients needing emergency services will be transferred to appropriate facilities to provide the emergency services they need. Patients requiring emergency department care will be transferred to nearby facilities for care. The nearest emergency department is located four miles from Sioux San, in Rapid City, South Dakota. Urgent care services serve the immediate needs of the vast majority of patients who come to the Sioux San emergency department, and these services will continue to be available at Sioux San 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Beginning September 20, patients experiencing a medical emergency such as a heart attack, severe wound or amputation, or car accident should call 911 or go to the nearest 24-hour emergency department, also located in Rapid City, South Dakota. Patients will continue to receive care at Sioux San Hospital for urgent care needs such as non-complicated splinting of broken bones; wound care; nausea, vomiting and diarrhea; and non-life-threatening allergic reactions.

“This action is one in a series of steps to focus on improving the patient care provided at Sioux San Hospital to better meet the needs of the patients we see and to enhance their quality of care.

This is consistent with IHS' commitment to provide timely, safe, reliable, effective quality care to this large patient population, commensurate with their medical needs, and to improve the patient experience at all IHS facilities," said Capt. Chris Buchanan, IHS Great Plains Area Acting Director. "Sioux San Hospital has a strong commitment to urgent care and will continue to provide urgent care services and all other current non-emergency care hospital services to patients in the Rapid City region. By shifting the focus of our clinicians to the services the vast majority of our patients require, we will be able to serve those patient populations more efficiently and effectively."

Many patients who were previously seen in the Sioux San Hospital Emergency Department for urgent care needs will still be able to use the urgent care services available at Sioux San. The IHS will be reaching out to patients regarding the planned temporary closure of emergency services, and providing educational materials and outreach to ensure that the community is aware that Sioux San will remain open for services and urgent care services will be provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Great Plains Indian Health Service Area is continuing to work on strengthening the availability of quality health services in greatest need by American Indians in the Rapid City area. This change in hospital services will allow Sioux San to focus on providing timely and quality urgent care and other services that the majority of the patient population depends on. With funding from Congress approved in fiscal year 2016, planning for new construction at the Sioux San facility, in consultation with tribal leadership, is underway with the aim of awarding a design contract in the first half of 2017.

IHS has initiated tribal consultation with tribal leaders on the transition of services at Sioux San Hospital, and will continue to engage and collaborate with tribal organizations, state and local government agencies, historic preservation groups and local health facilities on plans for a proposed new facility.

The Sioux San Hospital is located at 3200 Canyon Lake Drive, Rapid City, South Dakota 57702.

The IHS Great Plains Area serves 130,000 patients in Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota and North Dakota by operating 15 federal government facilities and funding the operations of 18 tribally operated health facilities.

The IHS, an agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives.

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