



## Indian Health Service Press Release

June 2, 2016  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Contact: (301) 443-3593, [newsroom@ihs.gov](mailto:newsroom@ihs.gov)

---

---

### **IHS to Conduct Tribal Consultation on Operations of Regional Office for Great Plains**

*Four consultation sessions are scheduled throughout the summer*

The Indian Health Service will conduct a 90-day consultation with Tribal leaders and confer with Urban Indian organization representatives to discuss the organization and operation of the IHS Great Plains Area Office. 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, and the Area Office provides overall direction and leadership, including strategic coordination, policy, high-level management and technical assistance to these health facilities.

“This consultation is part of a strategic discussion with Tribal leaders about how the Great Plains Area Office can be more supportive and patient focused. The priority here is to support the needs of the Tribes in the Great Plains Area,” said IHS Principal Deputy Director Mary Smith. “I believe that partnership is the key to transforming IHS. IHS is committed to listening to concerns and to working with the Tribes in the Great Plains Area to explore options.”

IHS will host two telephone sessions on June 22, 2016 and August 10, 2016. Two in-person sessions are scheduled for July 13, 2016 in Aberdeen, South Dakota and August 30, 2016 in Rapid City, South Dakota.

Tribal leaders and Urban Indian organization representatives are invited to participate and submit written comments. Representatives from Tribal and Native non-profit organizations are welcome to attend the sessions as observers.

The announcement on the 90-day consultation period and information about comment submission can be found in the Federal Register notice: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2016/06/03/2016-13135/meetings-tribal-consultation-and-urban-confer-sessions-on-the-state-of-the-great-plains-area-indian>.

According to law and the [IHS Tribal Consultation Policy](#), tribal consultation occurs when there is a critical event that may impact Tribes, new or revised policies or programs are proposed or the IHS budget request and annual performance plan are being developed. Read more about [IHS Tribal Consultation](#).

Review the [IHS Principal Deputy Director’s recent briefing on Great Plains Area operations](#).

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.

###