Indian Health Service
Press Release

IHS Receives Accreditation in Health Data Standards
Accreditation Ensures Compliance with Security Infrastructure, Integrity, and Trusted Identity Requirements

The Indian Health Service received a two-year full accreditation with the Direct Trusted Agent Accreditation Program for Health Information Service Providers from the Electronic Healthcare Network Accreditation Commission and DirectTrust. Direct Trusted Agent accreditation recognizes excellence in health data processing and transactions, and ensures compliance with industry-established standards, HIPAA regulations and the Direct Project. The IHS joins 98 other health care organizations in achieving this accreditation. IHS and the Department of Veterans Affairs are the first federal agencies so recognized.

"The Indian Health Service remains a leader in providing the highest service to our American Indian and Alaska Native communities and to be among the first government agencies to achieve this status shows the agency to be on the forefront of patient information security," said IHS Principal Deputy Director, Robert G. McSwain. "This is an important distinction, as it speaks to our commitment to raise the quality of care in the ever-changing healthcare field."

Through the consultative review process, EHNAC evaluated IHS in the areas of privacy, security and confidentiality; technical performance; business practices; and organizational resources as it relates to Directed exchange participants. In addition, EHNAC reviewed the organization's process of managing and transferring protected health information and determined that the organization meets or exceeds all EHNAC criteria and industry standards. Through completion of the accreditation process, IHS demonstrates adherence to strict standards and participation in a comprehensive, objective evaluation.

A Health Information Service Provider is an organization that provides security services between care providers to support coordinated care based on the Direct protocol via the Internet. A HISP assures the identity of participants, entities and individuals, and validates the secure connection. They also issue and maintain emails that contain a digital certificate that allows the HISP to send and receive Direct messages through a secure email portal.

IHS, an agency within 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.

For more information on the IHS Office of Information Technology, visit http://www.ihs.gov/OIT/. For more on the Resource and Patient Management System for management of clinical and administrative information, visit http://www.ihs.gov/RPMS/.

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