

**Great Plains Area
Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee
FY2023 2nd Quarter Report
October to December 2022**

Area Tribal Representatives: Alicia Mousseau, Vice President Oglala Sioux Tribe	Federal Liaison: Daniel Davis, Deputy Area Director Great Plains Area
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Goal 1: To ensure that comprehensive, culturally appropriate personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaska Native people

Weber Report “A Focused Retrospective Review by Integritas Creative Solutions (ICS), of IHS Response to Allegations of Sexual Abuse, A Medical Quality Assurance Review” January 2020. After a review of the information shared from the Indian Health Manual Part 7 Human Resources Administration and Management, it is found that the IHS has a process in place to review suitability when someone is hired. However, it is difficult to determine from the information provided if the IHS is being proactive in holding their supervisors and leadership accountable for situations like Weber. The ICS report found many issues with those who managed the Weber situation. How are these supervisors that were involved now being held accountable? And how are any new individuals being trained to deal with Weber situations? The policies provided address how someone is hired and their suitability is evaluated. But it does not address how supervisors are held accountable when they pass along an employee such as Weber. The ICS Report cited multiple root causes that were associated with management and supervision. The ICS report also noted failures in the credentialing process that allowed Weber to go without further investigation by the IHS. The ICS report provided some recommendations. Were all or some of the recommendations implemented? The ICS report mentioned a policy that was developed in 2019 concerning sexual abuse of children by health providers. Could this policy be reviewed with the DSTAC and can the DSTAC get all of the changes that were made, why they were made, and how they will help prevent another Weber situation? This will help the DSTAC clearly see what the IHS has done to correct the flaws that allowed the Weber situation happen and allow the DSTAC to ask questions and provide input and support.

Goal 2: To promote excellence and quality through innovation of the Indian health system into an optimally performing organization

Weber Report “A Focused Retrospective Review by Integritas Creative Solutions, of IHS Response to Allegations of Sexual Abuse, A Medical Quality Assurance Review” January 2020.

There is a need to improve the Budget Formulation process in the Great Plains Area. The Area held a budget formulation meeting in November 2021. There is a need to be transparent and ensure the goal of the process is understandable. There is a need to be timelier with scheduling and sharing of information. More specifically, more time is needed to have meaningful conversations about the budget with the tribal leaders to ensure agreement and true collaboration to optimally provide the most effective and efficient public health services and an optimally performing organization.

A need to address the challenges faced by Tribal Emergency Medical Service Ambulance Programs and their ability to serve Direct Service healthcare facilities.

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Goal 3: To strengthen IHS program management and operations

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The Direct Service Tribes Advisory Committee (DSTAC) met on July 21, 2022 and agreed to send a letter in response to the Indian Health Service’s (IHS) complete disregard of the 12 Great Plains tribal leaders’ unanimously selected applicant for the IHS Great Plains Director and lack of communication from IHS with the Great Plains tribal leaders in regard to this hiring process. This IHS leadership position is key to the health of our tribal nations. The lack of communication is disrespectful and the delayed and thwarted hiring of Area director by the IHS is unacceptable, a poor reflection on the treaty and trust responsibility of the Federal Government, and does not reinforce the Government-to-Government relationship between Indian Tribes and the United States. This is specifically concerning given President Biden’s public commitment to authentic and meaningful Government-to-Government relations with tribes. Those of us working and living in our tribal communities do not have the luxury to ignore the fact that the lives of our people are on the line. We will continue to place the health and welfare of our people as our highest priority. A new Acting Director has been appointed since the 1st Quarterly meeting. Hiring a new permanent Director is most important to our Tribes.

Continue to work cooperatively between the Direct Service facilities and the Tribes in response to COVID-19. Sharing of supplies and services has been helpful.