

Portland Area Facilities Advisory Committee



Andrew Joseph, Jr. – Colville, Committee Chair □ Pearl Capoeman-Baller – Quinault □ Julia Davis-Wheeler – Nez Perce □ CAPT Leslie Dye – PAIHS □ Dan Gleason – Chehalis □ Ed Fox – Squaxin Island □ Mark Johnston – Grand Ronde □ Angela Mendez – Shoshone-Bannock □ Sharon Stanphill – Cow Creek □ John Stephens – Swinomish □ Aurolyn Stwyer – Warm Springs

Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, M.P.H., M.D.
Director, Indian Health Service
Reyes Building
801 Thompson Avenue
Rockville, MD 20852-1627

Dear Dr. Roubideaux:

On behalf of the Portland Area Facilities Advisory Committee (Committee), I would like to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to meet with us on November 4. We appreciate your willingness to hear our presentation on improving access to specialty care. The Committee was pleased to learn, via a letter from Mr. Ronald Demaray on November 23, of your intent to respond within 60 days to our Recommendation to fund specialty care referral centers (a Demonstration Project) in the Portland Area. The purpose of this letter is threefold: We wish to 1) provide you with ways to contact us should you have additional questions or feedback; 2) reaffirm our commitment to the Demonstration Project concept; and 3) remind you of the urgency of our request for funding of a Demonstration Project, not only to serve the Tribes of the Portland Area, but to answer the call for innovation and reform across the Indian Health Service (IHS).

The Committee would welcome the opportunity to meet with you again, either by phone or in person, to address any questions that may come up during your review of the *Interim PAFAC Report, October 30, 2009* (Report). The Committee also intends to amend the Report to incorporate your feedback and comments. Please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Gene Kompkoff, of the Portland Area IHS, either to provide comments, or to schedule a meeting.

As we expressed during our November 4 meeting with you, we feel the best way to validate the concept's viability is through the collection of actual data. The Report presents evidence that indicates the viability of a specialty care regional referral centers in the Portland Area.

The Tribes of the Portland Area feel strongly that regional specialty referral centers have a place in the IHS healthcare delivery system, and have expressed their support through Tribal resolution #10-01-04 of the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board. Portland Area Tribes have a long history of successful collaboration. This storied history of Tribal partnerships in the Portland Area is an essential ingredient to the success of the committee's recommendation.

Like you, the committee sees the need to look outside the current system for creative solutions to improve access to patient care. The Demonstration Project is consistent with your priority to bring reform to the IHS by demonstrating a willingness to change and improve the manner in which the Agency addresses health facilities construction projects. We feel this project represents an innovative approach to the delivery of direct care services to Tribes who currently rely on contract health services or who must go without health care altogether.

Portland Area Tribes have tremendous unmet needs related to specialty and inpatient care that can only be met with a health facility complete with a staffing package capable of providing such services. We therefore respectfully request that you provide at least \$3.4 million to be funded over Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011, to include planning, site surveys and selection, architectural and engineering design, and to assist in developing a governing structure for the facility.

Once again, I wish to thank you for hearing our presentation. As you consider all proposals, we respectfully ask that you look favorably on our recommendation. In doing so, we feel you will be taking the delivery of healthcare in the IHS in a new direction that will be beneficial to all across Indian Country. We anxiously await your decision.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrew C. Joseph, Jr.".

Andrew Joseph, Jr.,
Chairman, Portland Area Facilities
Advisory Committee

cc: Ms. Doni Wilder, Director, PAIHS
Mr. Rich Truitt, Director, OEHE
PAFAC members (see letterhead).