



MAY 21 2010

Indian Health Service
Rockville MD 20852

Mr. Andy Joseph
Chairman
Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
2121 SW Broadway Drive, Suite 300
Portland, OR 97201

Dear Chairman Joseph:

On behalf of the Indian Health Service (IHS), we extend our gratitude to the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) for meeting with Mr. Randy Grinnell, Deputy Director, IHS, and other IHS staff on Thursday, May 4, at the 2010 Annual Tribal Self-Governance Conference in Scottsdale, AZ. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Director, IHS, was unable to attend this Tribal Delegation Meeting to listen and to discuss your issues and concerns. The issues from this meeting have been raised with the Director, IHS.

Thank you for raising questions regarding the IHS Contract Health Services (CHS) workgroup and the Regional Referral Specialty Care Centers Proposal. Earlier this year, the Director, IHS, issued a letter to Tribal Leaders requesting input on how to improve the CHS program. Tribes were invited to a listening session and a best practices meeting in February, however, due to inclement weather, these meetings had to be rescheduled.

The Director, IHS, also communicated her plans to convene a workgroup with two representatives from each IHS Area to review input on how to improve the CHS program and to review the current formula for distribution of CHS program increases. Information will be shared soon to announce the meeting dates for the CHS Workgroup. We look forward to your contributions to this workgroup.

As stated in the meeting, the Director is looking at innovation processes. The proposal for a Regional Referral Specialty Care Centers falls into this area. There will be consultation on Health Facilities construction in FY 2010, and the Agency looks forward to further input regarding how the innovations presented within the scope of the Referral Specialty Care Center will fit within this consultation. Finally, as indicated by Mr. Grinnell, a response is forthcoming to the Portland Area Facilities Advisory Committee's presentation of the results of the Regional Referral Center study presented to Headquarters in November of 2009.

If you have any questions or my office may be of any assistance to you, please contact Ms. Carol L. Nuttle, Program Analyst for the Portland Area, by telephone at (301) 443-7821 or by email at Carol.Nuttle@ihs.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Hankie P. Ortiz
Director

Office of Tribal Self-Governance