



Rear Adm. Chris Buchanan

Deputy Director for Field Operations Indian Health Service

Rear Adm. Chris Buchanan, an enrolled member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, is the deputy director for field operations of the Indian Health Service, an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services. The IHS is the principal federal health care advocate and provider of health care services for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

As deputy director for field operations, Rear Adm. Buchanan provides management oversight and resource allocation for six IHS Area Offices: Albuquerque, Nashville, Navajo, Oklahoma City, Phoenix, and Tucson. The Indian health care system delivers comprehensive services to nearly 2.7 million eligible American Indians and Alaska Natives residing on or near reservations directly served by the IHS or through tribally contracted and operated health programs.

Rear Adm. Buchanan served as the IHS Deputy Director from 2016 through 2021. During this time he was the acting IHS director from January to June 2017, administering a nationwide health care delivery program responsible for providing preventive, curative, and community health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives. In 2016, he served as the acting IHS Great Plains Area director overseeing a complex health care program during a period of change. Previously, he served as director of the IHS Office of Direct Services and Contracting Tribes. From 2005 through 2010, he held management positions in the Oklahoma City area. In 2010, he served as the administrative officer of clinical services for the Chickasaw Nation's Division of Health in Ada, Oklahoma.

Rear Adm. Buchanan began his IHS career in 1993 as an environmental health officer in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. He has served in various environmental health positions in the Phoenix, Albuquerque, and Oklahoma City IHS areas. Rear Adm. Buchanan has served on several national IHS workgroups and deployed to several natural disaster events. He has received numerous professional awards. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental health from East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma, and a Master of Public Health in health policy and administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.