



DEC 02 2020

Dear Urban Indian Organization Leader:

The Indian Health Service (IHS) is initiating Urban Confer to seek input from Urban Indian Organization (UIO) Leaders on a draft revised memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). This Urban Confer complements the joint Tribal Consultation initiated by the IHS and the VHA. For your convenience, enclosed is a copy of a draft revised MOU.

The VHA and the IHS entered into an initial MOU to improve access and health outcomes for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans in February 2003. Building upon a decade of successful collaboration and further established mutual goals to advance collaboration, coordination, and resource sharing, a revised MOU was implemented in October 2010. The current proposed revisions support our objective to improve access and health care outcomes for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans.

Engaging in meaningful Urban Confer will assist us in achieving our goal to execute a revised MOU. Your input and recommendations will assist us in making improvements to the MOU and encourage collaboration between our Federal entities to the maximum extent permitted by law.

I invite UIO Leaders to submit written comments on the revised VA-IHS MOU to urbanconfer@ihs.gov within the Confer period, which concludes on **Friday, February 12, 2021**.

In addition to written input, as part of this Urban Confer, the IHS and the VHA plan to hold a series of informational and listening session Webinars to share and gather input. We will provide further details soon.

Thank you for helping advance this partnership and enhance care delivery for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans.

Sincerely,

/Michael D. Weahkee/

RADM Michael D. Weahkee, MBA, MHSA
Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health
Service Principal Deputy Director

Enclosure: Draft Revised VA-IHS Memorandum of Understanding