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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH  
WASHINGTON DC 20420

October 7, 2015

Dear Tribal Leader:

We are writing to facilitate tribal consultation on the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) effort to improve continuity of care and health care access via the development of a non-VA care core provider network utilizing agreements with high quality partners who also share the privilege of serving Veterans.

In July 2015, Congress passed the VA Budget and Choice Improvement Act, which calls for VA to develop by November 1, 2015 a plan to consolidate and streamline VA community care. In this plan, we would like to reference the Indian Health Service (IHS) and Tribal Health Programs (THP) as members of our core provider network. Inclusion in the core network of providers would preserve and build on VA's existing relationships with IHS and THP and facilitate future collaboration to improve health care services provided to all eligible, enrolled Veterans. Future collaborations may focus on streamlined credentialing processes and enhanced care options for Veterans.

We are seeking tribal consultation regarding the inclusion of IHS and THP as part of the proposed core provider network, as well as VA's efforts to streamline the provision of non-VA care to Veterans. We note that VA will be seeking additional tribal consultation on its VA community care plan after November 1, 2015.

Written comments may be submitted to [tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov](mailto:tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov) by October 26, 2015. For additional information regarding this effort please contact Marvin Rydberg at [Marvin.Rydberg@va.gov](mailto:Marvin.Rydberg@va.gov) or (202) 904-7287.

We appreciate your support and partnership as we move forward to enhance and improve the experience for our Veterans.

Sincerely,

David J. Shulkin, M.D.