



NICOA

National Indian Council On Aging

Advocating for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders

NATIONAL INDIAN COUNCIL ON AGING

Resolution # 2014-08

TITLE: NICOA Elders Support Dental Therapy for all American Indian Rural Areas

WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Indian Council on Aging, Inc. (NICOA) of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the issues and needs of American Indian and Alaska Native Elders, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety, and welfare of our Elders, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, NICOA was established in 1976 by Tribal Leaders to advocate for improved comprehensive health, social services, and economic wellbeing for American Indian and Alaska Native Elders. NICOA submits to the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) this resolution passed by its members at their biennial meeting on September 5, 2014; and

WHEREAS, American Indians suffer greater health disparities than the population at large. Quality dental care is essential to overall health. An Indian Health Service (IHS) Oral Health survey shows that nearly 25% of adults over 65 are completely edentulous meaning that they completely lack teeth; and

WHEREAS, there is a shortage of qualified dental health care professionals in Indian Country. By developing training programs for underserved American Indian areas, the possibility exists for improved health for all Natives especially vulnerable Elders. A model Dental Therapist program has been in existence, has been thoroughly evaluated for safety, quality, and appropriate scope of practice in Alaska, and has received high results and accolades from patients, health care professionals and community leaders in the U.S., and in over 50 other countries; and

WHEREAS, this program could easily be adapted for all those living in rural areas who suffer from lack of adequate dental care and could potentially help many underserved populations; and


WHEREAS, there is growing awareness of this problem and potential solution with several resolutions already approved by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI); and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NICOA Elders do hereby support the current resolutions approved by the NCAI that urge adoption by tribal leaders of a two year training model as demonstrated by the implementation of the Alaska Dental Health Aides Therapists program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be the policy of NICOA until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the above resolution was passed before a duly called meeting of the National Indian Council on Aging membership on 5, September 2014, in Phoenix, AZ, at which a quorum was present.


Chairman