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NIHB Comments on Proposed ACO Rule

On June 6th, the National Indian Health Board submitted comments to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regarding the proposed rule on Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs). In the rule, CMS creates great incentives for providers to become ACOs, provider networks capable of providing the full continuum of care to Medicare patients, while receiving financial incentives and/or penalties based on the quality of care given. The rule requires that these providers meet standards in the following areas:

- Patient/caregiver care experiences
- Care coordination
- Patient safety
- Preventive health
- At-risk population/frail elderly health.

NIHB's comments to CMS on this rule focus on the need for greater consultation with Tribes and consideration of Indian Health providers during the implementation of this provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. As written, the rule does not necessarily promote meaningful participation from the Indian Health System, especially in rural areas. To view these comments, please visit:

<http://www.nihb.org/indianhealthreform/home>

NIHB Submits Comments on SAMHSA Proposed Unified Block Grant

The National Indian Health Board submitted comments on June 9th to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) regarding a proposal to unify the Fiscal Year 2012 application for the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHSBG) and the Substance Abuse and Prevention Treatment Block Grant (SAPTBG) programs to states. Only States and Territories are eligible for these block grants which are meant to encourage innovative behavioral health programs at the state and local levels. However, while SAMHSA encourages states to consult with Tribes on the formation and implementation of these programs, there is no state-Tribe consultation requirement. NIHB feels great strides could be achieved in the mitigation of Indian Country's behavioral health crisis if states are required to consult with Tribes when applying for these grants. To view these comments, please visit: www.nihb.org



OTHER UPDATES

Fourth ACA Case Reaches Appeals Court

On June 8th, three judges in the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments for one of the most significant challenges to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). The case, Florida et al. vs. the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, centers on whether the individual mandate to carry health insurance is constitutional and if not, can be severed from the larger law. 25 states join Florida in the suit, which saw the entirety of ACA deemed unconstitutional because of a lack of severability in a lower court this January.

The three judge panel noted the lack of precedent for the federal government requiring the individual purchase of a product, but acknowledged the uniqueness of health insurance and the health insurance industry. As one of the more high profile cases, it is considered likely that this particular case against ACA will reach the Supreme Court.

For more information and to track existing cases, please visit the Kaiser Health Network at:

<http://www.kaiserhealthnews.org/Stories/2011/March/02/health-reform-law-court-case-status.aspx?#thomasmore>

Sign Up for Washington Report, at:

http://www.nihb.org/legislative/washington_report.php

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NEXT WEEK IN WASHINGTON

**HOUSE ENERGY AND COMMERCE
HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON,
“PPACA’S EFFECTS ON MAINTAINING
HEALTH COVERAGE AND JOBS: A REVIEW
OF THE HEALTH CARE LAW’S
REGULATORY BURDEN”**

DATE: WEDNESDAY JUNE 15TH

TIME: 3:00 PM

LOCATION: 2322 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE
BUILDING, WASHINGTON, DC

SAVE THE DATE

IHS TRIBAL CONSULTATION SUMMIT

JULY 6 -7, 2011

WASHINGTON, DC

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