

**NOV 17 2011**

Dear Tribal Leader:

On November 5, 2009, President Obama issued an Executive Memorandum requiring all agencies to engage in regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with Tribal officials. Subsequently, on December 14, 2010, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) revised its Tribal Consultation Policy.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is committed to fulfilling its government to government relationship with Indian Tribes, and is pleased to announce that CMS has developed an agency specific policy to establish a clear, concise and mutually acceptable process through which consultation can take place between CMS and Tribes. Enclosed is a copy of the CMS Tribal Consultation Policy.

We know how important Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP and the development of the Exchanges are to Indian Tribes and their communities served by Indian health programs, whether operated by the Indian Health Services (IHS), Tribes, Tribal organizations, or Urban Indian organizations. CMS has been a leader in working with federally recognized Tribes and is one of a very few agencies to have a tribal advisory group (the CMS Tribal Technical Advisory Group or TTAG) recognized in statute. CMS believes that this policy will provide additional opportunities to work even more closely with Tribes on a government to government basis.

In response to the release of this policy, CMS will hold an **All Tribes Call on Friday, December 9, 2011 at 1pm - 3pm EST** to discuss the policy and answer any questions Tribes may have. The conference call number is **(888) 637-7740** and the password for the call is **538239**.

I want to thank you for your contributions that helped us develop an effective CMS Tribal Consultation Policy. Please know that I understand the challenges faced in providing access to quality and affordable care to members of your Tribal communities and that CMS is committed to sustaining our partnership to help make that care even more accessible.

Sincerely,

Donald M. Berwick, M.D.

Enclosure