

National Indian Health Board



National Indian Health Board Resolution 16-01

Establishment of a Task Force to investigate the Quality of Care at the Indian Health Service and to Make Recommendations for reform at the IHS

WHEREAS, the National Indian Health Board (NIHB), established in 1972, serves all Federally recognized American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribal governments by advocating for the improvement of health care delivery to AI/ANs, as well as upholding the Federal government's trust responsibility to AI/AN Tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, the unmet health needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives are severe and the health status of American Indians and Alaska Natives is far below that of the general population of the United States, resulting in an average life expectancy for American Indians and Alaska Natives 4.2 years less than that for the U.S. all races population; and

WHEREAS, the Indian Health Service (IHS) operates 28 Federally funded/Federally staffed hospitals and 62 health clinics across the IHS system; and

WHEREAS, at least three of these hospitals in the Great Plains Region have been terminated or received threats of termination from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) making the facilities ineligible to bill Medicare or Medicaid for eligible services provided; and

WHEREAS, the NIHB has also learned that these determinations by CMS were a direct result of the findings of a series of successive CMS investigations into the IHS's management and operation of these facilities; and

WHEREAS, these reports raise serious questions about the quality of health care in the Great Plains Region and have exposed a systemic lack of quality care being provided in at least three hospitals being run by the Indian Health Service; and

WHEREAS, a 2010 report by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs titled: "In Critical Condition: The Urgent Need to Reform the Indian Health Service's Aberdeen Area" cited many of the same issues that were found in recent CMS investigations; and

WHEREAS, IHS agency and regional leadership have not instituted changes that have led to greater reform at the IHS and improvements in patient care; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Indian Health Board will seat and conduct a special Task Force to examine and document an investigation into the mismanagement and poor care at IHS-run hospitals; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, NIHB use the findings of the Task Force to create a strategic action plan that will address the shortcomings highlighted in the aforementioned investigation and recommend a plan of action for IHS to provide quality healthcare to all patients within one year.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Board, with quorum present, on the 20th day of January 2016.



Chairperson

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary