



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Under Secretary for Health  
Washington DC 20420

January 6, 2017

Chief Lynn Malerba  
Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut  
Chairwoman, IHS Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee  
c/o Self-Governance Communication and Education  
P.O. Box 1734  
McAlester, OK 74502

Dear Chief Malerba:

I am writing in response to your letters to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) dated April 18, 2016, and August 23, 2016, requesting to expand the current Indian Health Service (IHS)/Tribal Health Program (THP) reimbursement program to include reimbursement for Purchased Referred Care in the community and reimbursement for Non-Native Veterans. VA is very interested in building on our existing relationship with IHS and THPs, and expanding our collaboration with both to the benefit of American Indian (AI)/Alaska Native (AN) Veterans.

VA is in the process of consulting with tribal leaders to collect feedback on ways to improve the existing reimbursement agreements. VA has suggested renewing all existing THP agreements and the VA-IHS National Reimbursement Agreement through December of 2018. This will give us time to conduct necessary tribal consultations and collect tribal feedback. We look forward to developing effective solutions that will increase our collaboration with IHS and THPs and enhance care provided by IHS and THPs to AI/AN Veterans and potentially Non-Native Veterans.

If you have further questions, please have a member of your staff contact the VHA Community Care Congressional Response Department at (303) 370-5010, or [CBOPC.Congressional@va.gov](mailto:CBOPC.Congressional@va.gov).

Thank you for your continued support of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David J. Shulkin, M.D." The signature is written in a cursive style.

David J. Shulkin, M.D.