

**American Indian/Alaska Native Health Research Advisory Council (HRAC)  
Quarterly Conference Call  
October 11, 2012**

**HRAC Tribal Delegates and Alternates**

- Jim Crouch, California Area Alternate
- Cara Cowan Watts, Oklahoma Area Delegate
- Tom Anderson, Oklahoma Area Alternate
- Steve Kutz, Portland Area Delegate
- Chester Antone, Tucson Area Delegate
- Michael Peercy, National At-Large Member Delegate
- Malia Villegas, National At-Large Member Alternate

**HRAC Federal Partners**

- Wendy Perry, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
- Delight Satter, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Elijah Martin, Health Resources and Services Administration
- Alan Trachtenberg, Indian Health Service
- Tracy Branch, Office of Minority Health
- Wilbur Woodis, Office of Minority Health

**Other Attendees**

- Marie Keshick Miller, Gana-A'Yoo Services Corporation
- Darlene Sommer, Gana-A'Yoo Services Corporation
- Kendra King Bowes, Native American Management Services, Inc.

**Call to Order and Introductions**

- Introductions and facilitation: Cara Cowan Watts, Co-Chair
- A quorum was not reached on the call.

**1. HRAC Review of Draft Secretary Sebelius Letter**

- The purpose of the call was to review the letter drafted by Jim Crouch to address concerns raised at the HRAC Meeting on September 24, 2012 regarding Tribal Epidemiology Centers (EpiCenters) having access to state data. The group reviewed the marked up copy sent by Jay Butler, Alaska Area Alternate, and agreed to his proposed revisions.
- Cara Cowan Watts then asked for additional suggestions for the letter.
- Wendy Perry suggested striking the three words “authority of the” in the first sentence of the letter. All agreed.
- It was also noted that a comma is needed after 2010 in the first sentence of the letter.
- Malia Villegas recommended noting that Section 130 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCA) is what established Tribal EpiCenters as public health authorities. She thought it might help to be more specific instead of just stating the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Councilwoman Cowan Watts agreed and added that the language could be attached.

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- Alan Trachtenberg noted that the ACA is more recognizable.
- Jim Crouch replied that the Administration has identified the IHCIA as one of its priorities. He suggested adding a footnote with the statutory citation. He also thought having a legal mind review the letter could be useful.
- Wilbur Woodis noted that OMH could send it to the HHS Office of General Counsel for their review.
- Councilwoman Cowan Watts recommended asking the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) to partner with the HRAC to review the letter.
- Delight Satter said that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Tribal Advisory Committee asked that CDC serve as a broker to help gain access to data, but this shouldn't dissuade the HRAC from sending the letter as it would only help.
- Councilman Kutz added that another issue brought up at the September 24, 2012 meeting was regarding substantive charges on data by the state. He suggested adding language about not being charged more than the federal government or public entities.
- Dr. Trachtenberg suggested deferring the cost issue as more research would be needed.
- Councilwoman Cowan Watts said that she respectfully disagreed. It may not be solved with this letter but at least it can be brought to the Secretary's attention.
- Councilman Kutz suggested adding language to the letter that they can't be charged more than a county or adjoining state. Michael Percy agreed that the HRAC should take an opportunity to at least mention it.
- Tracy Branch offered to contact her colleagues at OMH to find out about rate information, which would be helpful to attach as a point of reference
- Councilwoman Cowan Watts noted that the United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) brought up the issue and they might be able to provide more information.
- Delight Satter noted that the "n" in Alaskan should be deleted in the second paragraph.

## **2. Next Steps**

- Councilwoman Cowan Watts asked that any grammar changes be sent to Kendra King Bowes. She also asked that Councilman Kutz and others send language regarding rate charges to Kendra and cc Jay Butler and Jim Crouch.
- Kendra King Bowes will follow up with Dee Sabbatus to get more information regarding fees to include in the letter.
- Tracy Branch will check with her OMH colleagues regarding rate information.
- Once the letter is updated, Malia Villegas will send to the NCAI General Counsel for review.
- Upon NCAI's review, OMH will send to the Office of General Counsel.

## **3. Adjournment**

- The conference call meeting was adjourned.