NOTICE OF CONSULTATION

The American Indian Health Commission consultation request on the licensing and certification of behavioral health providers and substance use disorder providers. (See request letter below.)

On Wednesday, December 5, 2018 a **roundtable technical presentation/discussion** as part of the agenda for the Monthly Tribal Meeting coordinated by the Health Care Authority (HCA) and the Department of Health at the HCA office in Olympia (normally set for 9:00am-12:30pm). On Thursday, December 13, 2018, from 1:00-2:00pm, a **collaborative consultation** during the DOH portion of the AIHC Delegates meeting, hosted by the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe in Sequim, WA. **GoToMeeting computer and call-in options are available for both meetings.** For more information contact Tamara Fulwyler, Tribal Relations Director by telephone: 360-870-8903 or by email: tamara.fulwyler@doh.wa.gov

**Tamara Fulwyler, MPH (Chickasaw)**
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December 6, 2018

John Wiesman, Secretary
State of Washington Department of Health
P.O. Box 47890
Olympia, WA 98504-7890

Dear Secretary Wiesman;

Times of change are good opportunity to review and update processes and make sure they are still beneficial and efficient. With the merger of Department of Behavioral Health and Rehabilitation into the Health Care Authority, license and certification of providers has moved to Department of Health. While this makes the sense, there was much work between Washington State Tribes and Department of Social and Health Services regarding certification of behavioral health providers that was resolved in the development of two different processes for mental health providers and substance use disorder providers. We want to ensure the history and previous agreements are honored as a new process is created. I am writing to you to request consultation to bring these two processes together and streamline them.

Two classes of behavioral health accreditation have been created and this has standing. We feel that only one kind of license or certification is needed with several ways to obtain it. This is supported by RCW 71.24.037:

(1) The secretary shall by rule establish state minimum standards for licensed or certified behavioral health service providers and services, whether those service providers and services are licensed or certified to provide solely mental health services, substance use disorder treatment services, or services to persons with co-occurring disorders

(2) Minimum standards for licensed or certified behavioral health service providers shall, at a minimum, establish: Qualifications for staff providing services directly to persons with mental disorders, substance use disorders, or both, the intended result of each service, and the rights and responsibilities of persons receiving behavioral health services pursuant to this chapter. The secretary shall provide for deeming of licensed or certified behavioral health service providers as meeting state minimum standards as a result of accreditation by a recognized behavioral health accrediting body recognized and having a current agreement with the department.
American Indian Health Commission for Washington

“Improving Indian Health through Tribal-State Collaboration”

It would seem, when this RCW was updated in April of 2016, there was not appropriate effort to address the Indian Health Care Provider process for behavioral health providers. It is imperative that this be address before the end of this calendar year as to ensure appropriate certification for IHCP providing behavioral health service. As stated above both the deeming process for providers of substance use disorders and the accreditation process for providers of mental health services work for IHCP. It is important that the new process, under your department, honors the sovereignty of each of the Tribes and understands that payment of Medicaid services for an AI/AN through an IHCP is the extension of the Federal Trust responsibility that has been passed down to the State.

If you have any questions, please contact Vicki Lowe at vicki.lowe.aihc@outlook.com or 360-460-3580.

Thank you,

Stephen Kutz, BSN, MPH
Chair, American Indian Health Commission

CC: Tribal Chairs
AIHC Delegates
MaryAnne Lindblad, Director Medicaid, HCA
Michael Langer, Acting Assistant Director DBHR, HCA
Tamara Fulwyler, Tribal Administrator, Department of Health
Jessie Dean, Tribal Affairs Administrator, Health Care Authority

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