

INTER TRIBAL ASSOCIATION of ARIZONA

received
9-2-14

August 29, 2014

- MEMBER TRIBES
 AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY
 COCOPA TRIBE
 COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES
 FORT McDOWELL YAVAPAI NATION
 FORT MOJAVE TRIBE
 GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY
 HAVASUPAI TRIBE
 HOPI TRIBE
 HUALAPAI TRIBE
 KAIBAB-PAIUTE TRIBE
 PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE
 PUEBLO OF ZUNI
 QUECHAN TRIBE
 SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA
 INDIAN COMMUNITY
 SAN CARLOS APACHE TRIBE
 SAN JUAN SOUTHERN PAIUTE TRIBE
 TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION
 TONTO APACHE TRIBE
 WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE
 YAVAPAI APACHE NATION
 YAVAPAI PRESCOTT INDIAN TRIBE

Wakina Scott, Ph.D.
 Division of State Demonstrations and Waivers
 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
 7500 Security Boulevard, Mail Stop S2-01-16
 Baltimore, MD 21244

RE: Renewal of Uncompensated Care Payments for Services Provided by Indian Health Services (IHS) and P.L.-638 Tribal Health Care Facilities under the 1115 Demonstration Waiver Amendment

Dear Dr. Scott,

On behalf of the 21 member Tribes of the Inter Tribal Association of Arizona, I write to strongly urge the renewal of the uncompensated care payments provided to Indian Health Services (IHS) and P.L. 93-638 (638) Tribal Health Care Facilities under the 1115 Demonstration Waiver amendment for services that were limited or eliminated by the State of Arizona. The Waiver amendment is slated to expire on December 31, 2014.

On November 1, 2013, the Arizona State Medicaid system, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) requested an amendment to the State's 1115 Demonstration Waiver. As requested, the amendment would continue its current authority to provide uncompensated care payments through September 30, 2016, to Indian Health Service (IHS) and 638 Tribal facilities for services provided to Medicaid-eligible adults that were eliminated or limited on October 1, 2010. These are adults with income up to 100% of the Federal Poverty Level. On December 26, 2013, AHCCCS was notified that the amendment was approved by CMS to continue uncompensated care payments, but for only one year.

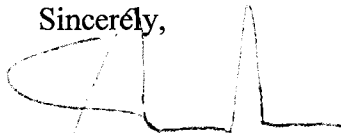
The payments made by AHCCCS under this authority have been critical in maintaining health care delivery for American Indian Medicaid beneficiaries provided at IHS and 638 facilities. The facilities are reimbursed for services delivered in or by a facility to individuals with household income up to 100% FPL in categories that the

Medicaid State Plan covered prior to October 1, 2010. As a result of the Great Recession these services had been eliminated along with an enrollment freeze on childless adults. The uncompensated care payment system was under discussion for about two years before it was finally approved by CMS resulting in loss of revenue to IHS and 638's. To date, it has helped to sustain staffing and vital services, including some that are significant to diabetes care and management such as adult well exams, services provided by a Podiatrist, orthotics and emergency dental care for adults.

Tribal leaders continue to advocate for the continuance of this Waiver so that Tribal members will not be adversely impacted by past decisions to eliminate and restrict benefits. Even though Governor Brewer's plan to restore coverage to childless adults and Medicaid expansion up to 133% FPL was passed and signed into law on June 17, 2013, these particular services were not restored. It is clear that without the renewal of the uncompensated care payments, the burden on IHS and tribal health care programs will increase substantially overtime.

For the reasons, the Inter Tribal Association of Arizona urges the prompt and permanent renewal of the 1115 Demonstration Waiver uncompensated care payments. If you have any questions, please contact me at (760) 629-4591, or contact Dr. Patrick McMullen at (602) 258-4822. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shan Lewis', with a large loop on the left side and a sharp peak on the right side.

Shan Lewis,
Vice-Chairman, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
President, Inter Tribal Association of Arizona

cc: Tom Betlach, Director, Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System