

Testimony and Follow-Up

North Dakota Health and Human Services Committee

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Recommendations/Solutions to service barriers

On Wednesday, June 2nd 2010, my office (North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission) held a meeting with Deborah Painte (Native American Training Institute), Vincent Gillette (Sioux County Social Services), Camille Driver (Native American Training Institute), Carol Cartledge (ND Dept. of Human Health Services), Tara Muhlhauser (ND Dept. of Human Health Services), Bev Mathiason (Rolette County Social Services) and Tove Mandigo (ND Dept. of Human Health Services).

The mission of this meeting was to follow up regarding Senator Mathern and the ND Health and Human Services Committee's request on March 23rd, in providing some recommendations, and perhaps solutions, to services barriers regarding social services programs within state, tribal and federal agencies.

The following are some outlined strategies addressed by the group:

- To hold an annual meeting with state, tribe and counties to go through the 4B process. A walk through/step by step to understand what is working and sustainable. Have a facilitator facilitate the 4B process. The Title IV-B training & technical assistance would only be for the tribal child welfare agencies as the state is very familiar with the process. Glennda Lacey is the Administration for Children, Youth & Families (ACYF) Children's Bureau Region VIII (Denver, CO) state & tribal representative for the state & tribes of North Dakota. She has the federal responsibility for providing information and technical assistance on Title IV-B to ND CFS & ND TCW's.
- Have tribal representation on a consistent and annual basis at tribal stakeholders meeting. Perhaps a letter from NDDHS Cabinet to Tribal Chairs to invite their participation of their tribal human service & social services programs. Stakeholders will discuss gaps in services with DHS Cabinet, and budget issues that will build up to the legislative session. This would be separate from the current regional meetings that DHS holds, but tribes could also still attend those regional meetings.
- Reevaluate county outreach to tribes. Identifying how the counties are assisting and share that with other counties who are located on or near reservations as it might generate ideas on how they could implement creative ways to provide tribal outreach.
- Tribal "paper work" has tardiness. Perhaps state/county can help with identifying what "paper work" needs immediate attention when called for.

- Jurisdiction issue: Need access of records or agreements between Federal/BIA, US Attorney, state and tribal law enforcement agencies, when investigations occur. For example, when incidents involve a tribal child that is under state custody but is receiving emergency medical attention on the reservation and a timely CPS investigation is impeded for lack of jurisdiction whether it be from a state or tribal standpoint.
- Tribal directors and county directors should meet on a consistent basis regarding all social service issues. Sherry Doe, Terry Traynor and all ND major cities may consider attending.
- Country directors meet on Thursdays at noon on a monthly basis, but need a two months notice of agenda items.
- Contact Jim Ganje/ND Supreme Court as another partner in addressing these issues through the Court Improvement Committee.
- Restate that there are 4E agreements in place between state and tribes and there is Technical Assistance available for tribes. The technical assistance is provided by the ND CFS through a contract with the Native American Training Institute (NATI), for a IV-E consultant to assist tribes in making their IV-E claims, time studies, eligibility, allowable billable activities, etc.
- Propose a 2 day meeting for 4E and 4B on how funding/monies can be used and how it funnels through Medicaid. The NATI has wanted to develop a Tribal Child Welfare financing and orientation for ND Tribal Child welfare directors, but currently NATI does not have a funding source for this the development of this training curricula. In the interim, NATI would be willing to facilitate a training session on this in collaboration with the Region VIII State/Tribal Rep. Glennda Lacey; Tara Muhlhauser, CFS Director and the NATI staff. NATI will share that offer with Glennda Lacy from Region VIII.
- Continue to reevaluate and strengthen the current Tribal-State Foster Care Agreements.

In closing, the ND Indian Affairs Commission feels that this is a good step in identify and providing solutions and recommendations for all social services programs in the state. We will continue to work closely with all agencies in strengthening communication, relationships and agreements in place that will benefit all those served. Also, thank you all those that attend the meeting on June 2nd, your participation and expertise is greatly appreciated.