



Information for families of children with special needs

Ages:

0-2

3-5

6-17

18-20

21+

Indian Health Service



The Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, delivers primary health care services to urban and on-reservation Native Americans. IHS has its own doctors, specialists, hospitals, clinics and other medical facilities. It also contracts with tribes to deliver medical services and operate tribally-run hospitals and clinics in the state. IHS is not an insurance program, or an established benefits package, or entitlement like Medicaid; instead, it is funded each year through U.S. Congressional appropriations. IHS was established in 1955 by the federal Transfer Act. Arizona is divided into 3 IHS Service Areas — Navajo, Tucson & Phoenix; these Service Areas also serve parts of NM, UT & NV. In 2008, 421,851 people received services from the three IHS regions in Arizona.

WHO is Eligible?

IHS facilities provide direct health care services to any on-reservation or urban Native American who is an enrolled member or descendent of a U.S. federally recognized tribe. IHS also serves some specific populations including a non-Indian woman pregnant with an eligible Indian's child after delivery, non-Indian in an Indian household with a communicable disease, or a non-Indian child living in an Indian household (restrictions apply).

WHAT Services Are Provided?

IHS Direct Care: Most IHS health facilities provide primary care (outpatient & some inpatient). Some sites provide secondary and specialty care, plus:

- Behavioral health & substance abuse services
- Dental screening & treatment
- Public health nursing (including immunizations)
- Health & nutrition counseling & education
- Environmental health services (e.g. housing, sanitation)

IHS Contract Health Services (CHS): Since IHS facilities do not offer a full range of health care services (esp. specialty and tertiary care), it contracts with non-IHS providers for "Contract Health Services", or "CHS". CHS requires a referral to an outside private hospital or specialist by an IHS doctor. For health care at non-IHS facilities to be paid by IHS, it must be authorized by the IHS Contract Health Services Program.

Before CHS authorizes your out-of-network referral, you must meet certain eligibility requirements including applying for any state medical program (AHCCCS, KidsCare, ALTCS, etc.) you may be eligible for. A Contract Health Services (CHS) representative at any IHS facility can assist you with your CHS status. An IHS Benefits Coordinator can assist you with applying for state medical assistance.

Because IHS funds are based on an annual Congressional appropriation, there is a chance that monies for CHS may run

out before the end of the federal fiscal year. Therefore, CHS are prioritized, with life-threatening illnesses or injuries given highest priority.

Tribal Facilities: IHS also contracts with tribes to provide services to their members at tribal-run health care facilities.

HOW MUCH Does it Cost?

No cost for IHS direct care, but if you have other health coverage (private insurance, AHCCCS, KidsCare, Medicare, etc.), your plan will be billed for health services provided by IHS. If you are eligible for AHCCCS or KidsCare but not currently enrolled, an IHS Benefits Coordinator will help you apply. Native Americans receive AHCCCS & KidsCare coverage at no cost.

HOW Are Services Provided?

IHS clinics provide ambulatory outpatient primary care. Hospitals on reservations provide inpatient care. For most surgeries, specialty & intensive care, IHS patients are referred to IHS regional medical centers (e.g. Phoenix Indian Medical Center, Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility, Tucson's Sells Hospital). If eligible for CHS (and CHS funds exist), you may be referred to a contracted non-IHS facility for care.

WHAT DOCUMENTS Do I Need?

1. Certificate of Degree of Indian or Alaskan Native Blood (CDIB) or Tribal Enrollment Document.
2. To prove descendency, parent(s) Certificate of Degree of Indian or Alaskan Native Blood (CDIB) or Tribal Enrollment Document and the Birth Certificate of the descendant.

WHERE Do I Apply?

In person: The Patient Registration Office of your local IHS facility. All new patients must be registered and have an IHS patient number before receiving services.

<http://www.ihs.gov>