



Indian Health Service Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IHS and VA launch outpatient pharmacy program

The Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have launched a pilot program between the Rapid City PHS Indian Hospital in Rapid City, S.D., and VA's Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP) program in Leavenworth, Kan. The pilot program will improve safety and cost effectiveness by providing prescription refills by mail to support care for veterans and other IHS patients requesting the service in the Rapid City area. Patients will continue to get their medication information on-site at the time of their regular visits.

“This project helps the IHS meet our quality and access to care national priorities by lowering patient waiting times, increasing patient safety, and allowing pharmacists more time to perform the innovative clinical pharmacy services that IHS has become known for,” said Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, IHS Director.

Under this pilot program, patients can receive prescriptions in person when they visit their IHS facility or have their prescription refills processed through CMOP and mailed to their residence within 10 days. Health center staff will continue to be available to answer questions and counsel patients about prescriptions and will continue to monitor patients' health status, including prescriptions, during other types of visits. The network connectivity for this initiative was established with extensive testing and software validation for both agencies to ensure the integrity and security of prescription data.

The IHS expects to see a reduction in the number of medications not picked up due to long waits or a lack of transportation. Implementation of the CMOP program will also allow IHS pharmacists to spend more time in clinical and direct patient care activities.

Upon successful completion of the first program, plans will be made to expand it to other IHS facilities nationwide. A second CMOP pilot is planned for the Phoenix Indian Medical Center, a 127-bed hospital that serves 39 federally recognized Tribes residing within the Phoenix Area IHS region (Arizona, Utah, and Nevada), a much more complex facility.

NOTICE TO EDITORS: For additional information on this subject, please contact the public affairs staff at 301-443-3593. Additional information about the IHS is available on the IHS website at <http://www.ihs.gov>.

