South Dakota Department of Social Services

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South Dakota Medicaid Tribal Consultation Minutes
October 21, 2025

Attendees:
Heather Petermann, Matthew Ballard, Renae Hericks, Ashley Lauing, Mary Johnle, Kara Peery, Clarissa Barnes, Melanie Boetel, Erik Lujan, Vicki Ducheneaux, Sidney Bailey, Travis Jonhson, Janelle Cantrell, Peter Lengkeek, Bonnie Cromwell, Jessica Porras, Nola Taken Alive, Nico Sheppard, Marissa Figueroa, Vanessa Palmier, Kim Johnson, Rick Stracqualursi, Wilberta Red Tomahawk, Sara DeCoteau, Elise Johnson, Leah Belgarde, Stacia Nissen, Vicki Palmreuter, Leslie Wilson, Zane James.

Welcome and Introductions:
Heather Petermann, Medicaid Director, Department of Social Services (DSS), Division of Medical Services (DMS) welcomed the group, and everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

Review Minutes from the July 2025 Meeting:
Ashley Lauing, Policy Strategy Manager, DSS, DMS reviewed the minutes and indicated that minutes for the meeting can be found online on the Medicaid Tribal Consultation Website.

Tribal Medicaid Expenditure Dashboard:
Ashley Lauing introduced a new tribal expenditure dashboard informed by conversation held at the last tribal consultation meeting. The dashboard can be viewed online on the Medicaid Tribal Consultation Website.

State Plan Amendments (SPA):
Renae Hericks, Policy Manager, DSS, DMS reviewed SPAs currently in Tribal Consultation along with those currently with CMS. Slides can be found on the Medicaid Tribal Consultation Website.

OBBBA/HR1 Updates:
Mary Johnle, Kara Peery, and Heather Peterman provided an update on the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (HR1). Slides can be found on the Medicaid Tribal Consultation Website.

Comments and Discussion

- Nico Sheppard indicated that right now the website shows 6-7K recipients are showing as “unknown”. Does DSS have claims data for those individuals under “unknown/other” that could help identify if these are recipient are AI/AN?
    - Some claims data may be available to help identify this population. DSS will look into this further.
- Would the state need a new data-sharing agreement to share that information with the providers?
    - The State has some data sharing agreements incorporated into our provider agreements that may cover this, but others may be needed.
- Vanessa Palmier asked if DSS would be willing to come talk to an individual facility and seek feedback?
    - Yes, DSS would be willing to meet with facilities for feedback.

- Nico Sheppard asked if the state could send notice to those identified as “other” or “unknown” and ask them to complete?
    - DSS will look into this further.
- Nico Sheppard indicated that when cost sharing takes effect it will be important for DSS to provide training on exemption for AI/AN recipients.
    - DSS is making every effort to make sure all communications and online tools are designed to make understanding this easier for providers and recipients.
- Heather asked attendees to review the one-pager in detail and provide feedback to DSS for clarity and to email those to DSS.
    - Leah Belgarde indicated the one-pager is really helpful and she appreciates the early conversations before these changes go into effect
- Mary Johnle asked if there are other communications channels we should be using but aren’t to get this information out?
    - Nola Taken Alive stated that social media seems to be a big avenue for communication.
    - Nico Sheppard stated IHS has “good health tv” and that may be able to display some of this information in waiting rooms.
- Vanessa Palmier indicated on the online app asking for a drop down for unhoused to expedite applications.
- Nico Sheppard asked if DSS would look to develop a toolkit for tribal communications such as social media/radio/newspaper etc.?
    - DSS will take this under consideration with our communications team.
- Vanessa Palmier asked if the state could consider using colored paper to help recipients know the document is more than informational.
    - Mary Johnle stated that they would do some research and look into this suggestion.

Rural Health Transformation:
Dr. Clarissa Barnes, Chief Medical Officer, DSS, DMS provided an overview of value-based care that DSS is considering. Slides can be found on the Medicaid Tribal Consultation Website.

Matthew Ballard, Deputy Director, DSS, DMS provided an update on the Rural Health Transformation Program. Slides can be found on the Medicaid Tribal Consultation Website.

Comments and Discussion

- Rick Stracqualursi supported value-based care initiatives, but also expressed concern about funding levels in South Dakota that may make this type of initiative challenging.
- Peter Lengkeek expressed generally support with the idea.
- Nola Taken Alive raised concerns about the inability for tribes to receive funding as part of the RHTP. DSS indicated that the Rural Health Transformation funds will benefit rural communities and providers and anticipates the impact of the funds will benefit tribal members as well.

Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) Update
Melanie Boetel, Director, DSS, DBH introduced the current Native American Targeted campaigns DBH has been running and asked for feedback on them. Slides can be found on the Medicaid Tribal Consultation Website

Comments and Discussion

- Most attendees indicated that they have not seen or heard the campaign messaging. Recommendations overall were made for radio spots and newspapers.

Tribal/IHS/UIH/Tribal 638 Reports:

- Standing Rock Sioux Tribe just held elections a couple weeks ago. Looking forward to working with the State more amid changing in leadership.
- Sara DeCoteau from Sisseton/Wahpeton/Oyate is starting to see revenue generated through Asniyapi field health clinic.
- Nico Sheppard indicated that Great Plains Tribal Leaders Health Bboard (GPTLHB) is continuing to grow. It rebranded to "Great Plains Tribal Health."

Public Comment

- Eric Lujan with Centene corporation introduced himself and expressed interest in helping with value-based care.

Next Meetings:

- 01/20/2026 – virtual only
- 04/21/2026
- 07/21/2026
- 10/20/2026