

## **2001 Tribal Listening Session**

August 15, 2001

**Issue:** AoA should encourage the government to live up to and hold up to treaty rights and responsibilities and promote a better understanding of sovereignty and self-sufficiency.

**Resolution:** AoA serves on multiple committees and workgroups to continuously promote a better understanding of Tribal sovereignty and actively promotes government-to-government relationship. AoA is an active member of the DHHS/Tribal Self-Governance Demonstration Feasibility Study workgroup.

**Issue:** AoA should solicit and provide an opportunity for input from Tribes regarding development for the annual program budget and budget request to congress.

**Resolution:** Information from the 2001 listening session will be used to prepare the initial AoA 2003 budget.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage the interpretation of State/Federal/local rules to facilitate in the provision of services.

**Resolution:** AoA Continues to encourage coordination of services, including the interpretation of policies, rules, and regulations to facilitate this coordination.

**Issue:** AoA should be held accountable for taking action on these recommendations in this Administration and the next and that the dialogue continues.

**Resolution:** AoA is holding a second Tribal Listening Session in order to report on the actions that have been taken and to continue the dialogue and further develop action steps to implement these recommendations.

**Issue:** AoA should address the inadequacy of funding for Title VI and should consider allotting funds based on age 55 and over and 60 and over.

**Resolution:** Given the limited funding of Title VI, increasing the population would be detrimental to some Tribal Programs. However, AoA will continue to request increased funding for Title VI. The 2002 Administration's budget includes a \$2Million increase for Title VI.

**Issue:** AoA should provide disaster assistance directly to Tribes, with no minimum and no cap.

**Resolution:** The Newly reauthorized OAA states that disaster relief funds will be available to Tribal Organizations receiving a grant under title VI. However, the appropriations set a cap on the total amount of disaster funds available through AoA.

AoA has developed a process for which tribes can apply for disaster funds and distributed this information to all Title VI grantees.

A disaster relief manual has been distributed to the tribes. This includes a computer disk version of the manual for modifying the manual to local needs.

**Issue:** AoA should provide direct funding and training for family caregiving issues.

**Resolution:** The OAA includes direct funding for a Native American Caregiver Support Program. A national training for the family caregiver support program will be held Sept 6 and 7, 2001.

Since the family caregiver support program is new, both national and regional training will continue for the next few years.

**Issue:** AoA should discourage tribes from carrying over funds from year to year.

**Resolution:** The administration has met with the Directors of the Title VI Directors Association asking that each regional representative contact the Title VI grantees in their area to discuss the importance of not having carry over. Training around the area of carry over is also included in the workshops and conferences where training for the Title VI Directors occur in and out of AoA.

AoA will include a reminder about carryovers with the Request for Continuation 30 days before the end of 2001 budget year.

**Issue:** AoA should provide funding for annual national training and on-site technical assistance for Title VI Directors and program staff.

**Resolution:** The newly reauthorized OAA states that "the assistant secretary shall make grants and enter into contracts to provide in-service training opportunities and courses of instruction on aging to Indian tribes through public or nonprofit Indian aging organizations and to provide annually a national meeting to train directors of programs under this title." However, funding has not been provided in the AoA appropriations in order to allow this happen.

Several Regional Offices have provided Title VI training for the grantees within the region. Due to the limited travel budget, on-site technical assistance is currently only being provided by Regional Office staff during on-site monitoring visits.

**Issue:** AoA should send a letter to tribal leaders encouraging tribes to support staff so they can participate in meetings and training sessions.

**Resolution:** Tribal leaders were encouraged to bring along Title VI directors to the AoA Tribal listening session. Letters of support have been provided, when appropriate, to staff to attend various functions.

**Issue:** AoA should provide technology support for Tribal elders programs ex computers, program reporting software and training.

**Issue:** AoA should recruit more Indian people at decision-making levels at AoA.

**Issue:** AoA should develop new incentives to recruit and retain health personnel.

**Issue:** AoA should promote hiring culturally appropriate staff to overcome language barriers and respect traditions of elders.

**Issue:** Each tribe should be designated (or have the opportunity to be designated) as an Area Agency on Aging (AAA). AoA should provide Title III funding.

**Resolution:** Title VI was established for direct funding for tribes to separate it from Title III. From the administration's position, funding for the Title VI needs to increase so sufficient funds would be able to run Title III type programs.

**Issue:** AoA should provide leadership at the Title VI/Title III coordination and advocacy to assure State and Federal services are available to Indian elders.

**Resolution:** AoA, at both the National and regional levels, continually promotes Title VI/Title III coordination. Examples of this include presentations made at the annual conference of State Coordinators of services to Older Blind and vision impaired Persons and the Wisconsin State Benefit Counselors Annual Meeting.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage Title III Agencies to conduct outreach to tribal elders.

**Resolution:** This is an area addressed when Regional office Staff conducts on-site monitoring of the State units on aging. AoA provides continual education on the OAA Title III requirements for outreach to older individuals who are Native American. A recommendations will be made to the Assistant Secretary to evaluate the level of outreach to Native American elders under Title III at the State and AAA level in order to recommend necessary action to improve service delivery, outreach, coordination between Title II and Title VI services, and particular problems faced by older Indians and Native Hawaiians.

**Issue:** AoA should simplify Title III paperwork burden to be more like Title VI and not require reporting services not funded under Title III on NAPIS.

**Issue:** AoA should require states to involve Tribes in the state plan process and to require state plans to show specifically how states will coordinate with Tribes.

**Issue:** Tribes need to be proactive in getting tribal issues on the table for the States and AAAs to address.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage SUA Directors to acknowledge and respect Title VI Directors and staff when they are attending state conferences.

**Issue:** AoA should improve communication with the Tribes, including the timeliness of sharing of information. and effective dissemination of information to Title VI Directors.

**Resolution:** Current information is posted on the AoA website. Federal Register notices of availability of funds from AoA and other program announcements are posted on the web the day they are issued.

Current information is sent to all Title VI grantees. During 2000-2001, information was provided on funding opportunities from CDC, the Native American caregiver support program grants, AoA disaster assistance, etc.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage better access, less paper (Paper Reduction Act), usage of plain language, which is consumer friendly, enhanced coordination and data sharing among multiple agencies.

**Resolution:** AoA has met with HUD, NIH, and the Census Bureau to discuss data information issues. These discussions included what data is currently being collected by each agency, how it can be shared, and what are the gaps in data. A software program has been installed on the computers to assist AoA in Writing in "Plain English".

**Issue:** AoA should encourage USDA to simplify and speed up reimbursement.

**Resolution:** The OAA amendments of 200 include a new USDA Nutrition Services Incentive to replace the current elderly nutrition program. Under this new program, Title VI grantees will only report meal count members to AoA. AoA will then provide the numbers to USDA, thus eliminating the report to USDA.

**Issue:** AoA should review and enhance coordination with Tribes, national Indian organizations and other federal agencies.

**Issue:** AoA should assist Tribes in identifying resources for funding home and community-based care services, including adult day care, family caregiving, self-directed care, etc.

**Resolution:** AoA will work with other federal agencies to identify resources for funding community home-based sources and disseminate to tribal organizations. The American Indian Eldercare Locator Outreach Pilot Program began in February 2001 and will be evaluated for expansion in Indian Country at the end of the 12-month pilot test.

**Issue:** AoA should continue to recognize and advocate funding of health care services (clinics, Title VI) and for more diverse funding mechanisms, such as direct funding to Tribes and Tribal Organizations.

**Issue:** AoA should advocate for greater options for obtaining and paying for healthcare (vouchers).

**Issue:** AoA should advocate for specific allocations for long-term care, including facilities, staff, and general infrastructure.

**Issue:** AoA should work with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to make Medicare programs more accessible for Tribes.

**Resolution:** AoA and CMS are developing information to assist Tribes in identifying programs and resources for home and community based long-term care services. AoA and CMS are investigating ways to enhance outreach to and enrollment of dual eligible elders.

**Issue:** AoA should work with the Tribes to seek the following:

1. Waivers of state regulations over control of long-term care facilities on

reservations;

2. Licenses for LTC directly from CMS; and
3. Increase in QMB eligibility

**Issue:** AoA should work with CMS to provide a waiver to exempt Tribal members' personal assets from Medicaid eligibility.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage greater education of clients, families, and providers to better understand the range of long-term care, including personal care programs, health promotion and disease prevention, and health care services.

**Resolution:** The native elder health care resource center has developed modules to promote culturally appropriate education on some specific health care issues, such as diabetes, cancer, and depression.

Geriatrics leadership seminars conducted by the Native American Elder Resource Center promotes developing programs to improve communications among health care providers in Indian Communities.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage client education efforts to increase understanding of health problems, including risk and protective factors.

**Resolution:** AoA is assisting the National Eye Institute in developing materials for Indian Elders.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage greater attention to innovation activities and approaches to exercise, nutrition and wellness programs.

**Resolution:** AoA is working with other agencies, including HIS, to ensure elders are included in exercise, nutrition, and wellness programs.

**Issue:** AoA should heighten attention for the need to develop effective consumer protection programs.

**Resolution:** As a result of the 1995 White House Conference on Aging, Operation Restore Trust was developed to train Medicare beneficiaries to recognize fraud and abuse has decreased since the enactment of this program.

The Ombudsman program continues to act as a form of protection for older people in institutions.

**Issue:** AoA should promote demonstrations on new ways to offer eldercare services without fostering dependency.

**Issue:** AoA should work with other agencies to improve preventive clinical services, improve the delivery of healthcare, and promote preventive health care and services to both the elderly and disabled.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage a greater number and integration of Veterans Administration Services with AoA, IHS, etc.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage great integration of private, State, Federal, and Tribal services on behalf of elders.

**Issue:** A voice should be given to elder's concerns, needs, wants, and desires.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage the development of better transportation systems and roads on reservations

**Issue:** AoA should continue to recognize and address difficulties in transportation as an access point.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage the development of funding of group homes and other alternative housing options for elders on reservations

**Issue:** AoA should work with HUD to eliminate barriers and enhance access.

**Issue:** AoA should advocate for the recognition of the "unrecognized" homeless elders and the need for shelter homes.

**Issue:** AoA should seek funding for elder abuse programs.

**Resolution:** Under Title IV of the OAA the AoA has provided funding to the National center on Elder abuse to promote the development of elder abuse coalition in Native American Tribes. The Center plans to establish and advisory group of known and respected Native American organizations to help guide the project. In addition, as part of the project, the center will provide seed grants to support interested tribal governments and/or title VI projects in the development of elder abuse prevention/ intervention coalitions or groups. Up to seven projects will be funded.

**Issue:** AoA should promote greater education and understanding about elder abuse

**Resolution:** AoA has worked with the office of woman's health to provide funding to the National Resource Center on Native American Aging for an elder abuse project with Native Healers AoA is assisting the Health resources and Services administration (HRSA) in developing videotapes on elder abuse prevention.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage States to provide a portion of their allocations of Adult Protective Services funding to tribes.

**Issue:** AoA should encourage greater applied health research that informs education, treatment and prevention.

**Resolution:** The two Native American resource centers have been funded since 1994. Over this period of time, they have conducted and gathered research in the area of health and long-term care. Information has been developed and disseminated in the areas of depression, cancer, diabetes, etc. Each center has their own website where extensive bibliographies can be reviewed.