



Rear Adm. Chris Buchanan

Deputy Director

Indian Health Service

Rear Adm. Chris Buchanan, an enrolled member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, is Deputy Director of the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services. The IHS is the principal federal health care advocate and provider of health care services for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

As Deputy Director, Rear Adm. Buchanan leads and oversees IHS operations to ensure delivery of quality comprehensive health services. He ensures that IHS provides for the full participation of Tribes in programs and services and helps to establish and track the goals and metrics through which the IHS U.S.-federal-government-operated, or “direct service,” health care program improves outcomes. Rear Adm. Buchanan ensures IHS services are integrated across all levels of the agency and engaged with other Operating Divisions of the Department of Health and Human Services and external partners, including states and national organizations.

Buchanan served as acting IHS director from January to June 2017, administering a nationwide health care delivery program responsible for providing preventive, curative, and community health care to approximately 2.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives in hospitals, clinics, and other settings throughout the United States. He served as the Acting IHS Great Plains Area Director in 2016, overseeing a complex health care program during a period of change. Previously, he served as Director of the IHS Office of Direct Services and Contracting Tribes.

An environmental health officer in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps with more than 20 years of active duty, Rear Adm. Buchanan began his IHS career in 1993 serving in various environmental health positions in the Phoenix, Albuquerque, and Oklahoma City Areas of IHS. From 2005 through 2010, he held management positions in the Oklahoma City Area, including serving as the Administrative Officer for Lawton Indian Hospital and the Chief Executive Officer for Haskell Health Center. In 2010, he served as the Administrative Officer of Clinical Services for the Chickasaw Nation’s Division of Health in Ada, Oklahoma.

Rear Adm. Buchanan has served on several national IHS workgroups and deployed to several natural disaster events. He has received numerous professional awards, including the National Council of Chief Executive Officer’s Rookie of the Year. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental health from East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma, and a Master of Public Health degree in health policy and administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.