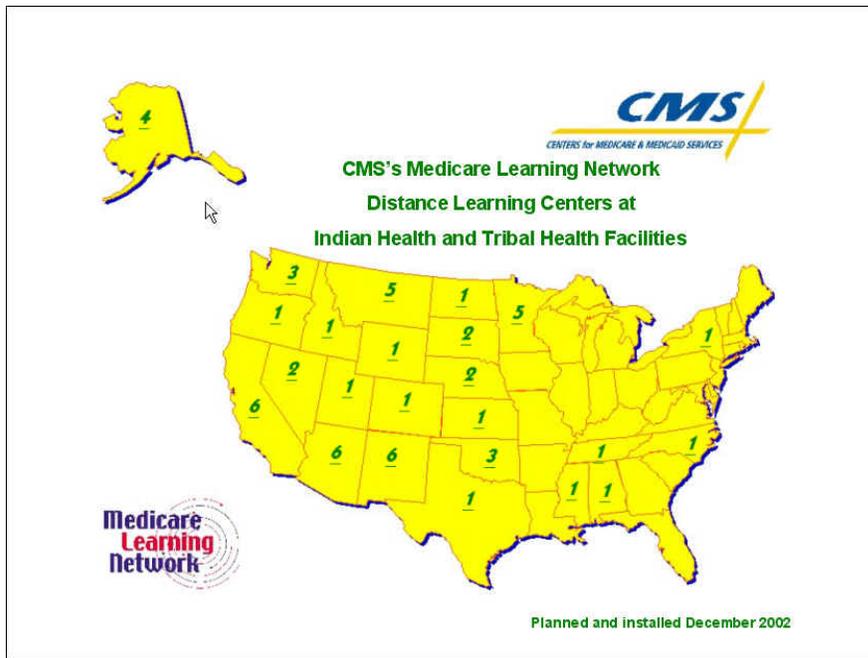


## CMS Indian Country Satellite Network Fact Sheet



In October 2002, CMS entered into an interagency agreement with Indian Health Services (IHS) to procure and install satellite dishes and provide satellite broadcast time to Indian healthcare facilities. These satellite dishes will reach out to Indian Health

Facilities in 24 States using a private digital satellite network. The Network will link 57 facilities to educational broadcasts from CMS and IHS. The network was developed in response to the BIPA of 2000, which extended Medicare reimbursement of IHS/Tribal facilities to include Part B as well as Part A services. The network will extend the educational reach of Trailblazer Health Enterprises, the contractor selected to process all Medicare bills from Indian Country.

The network uses the same DirecTV dishes used in homes all over America. Unlike consumer dishes, these dishes can only get one channel, the channel used by the CMS Medicare Learning Network.

In addition to meeting the needs of Indian Health and Tribal health providers for Medicare information, the network is available to other HHS components. Network programming will include training, conferences and events that were previously out of reach. The network will make it possible for the 57 sites to get training and information on Medicaid and HIPAA and can provide educational programming to beneficiaries as well as providers.

**Q. How were the 57 sites selected?**

**A. All 57 satellite sites were selected by the Indian Health Service, under an Intra-agency Agreement (IA) with CMS. The IA required IHS to select**

**sites in as many States as possible and to select sites that would open their doors to their rural neighbors. The network also brings CMS satellite broadcasts to Alaska for the first time.**

**Q. Why are we using satellite broadcasts rather than web-casts?**

**A. Digital satellite broadcasts provides much higher quality picture and sound in a format that can easily be recorded on a VCR. A web-cast may also require viewers to tie up a telephone line for an hour or more.**

**Q. Can the dishes be used to transmit video?**

**A. The dishes can only be used to receive satellite broadcasts. Viewers are encouraged to participate in live broadcasts over a toll free line provided by CMS.**

**Q. What are the costs to the local facilities?**

**A. The 57 sites will provide a television and a VCR. CMS provides the satellite dish and receiver and pays a small monthly activation fee.**

**Q. Who else can see this broadcast?**

**A. In addition to the 57 Indian Health and Tribal Health facilities, the broadcast will also be seen in all 10 CMS regional offices and at 83 carrier and intermediary sites in 41 States.**

**Q. Will the network be extended to other facilities?**

**A. CMS and IHS, in consultation with the Federally recognized Tribes, will evaluate the network before additional dishes are placed. Facilities outside Indian country are invited to access our analog broadcasts free of charge.**