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Office of the Chief

Chuck Hoskin Jr.
Principal Chief

Bryan Warner
Deputy Principal Chief

February 27, 2025

TO: Dr. Stephen Jones, Chief Executive Officer of Cherokee Nation Health Services
FR: Chuck Hoskin, Jr.
Principal Chief
CC: Cabinet Dr. Corey Bunch, Chief of Staff
Sub-Cabinet
Mike Shambaugh, Speaker of the Council of the Cherokee Nation

Administration Memorandum Directing a Review of the Current State of Telemedicine and Opportunities for Expansion Inside and Outside the Cherokee Nation Reservation by the Telemedicine Work Group

The purpose of this memorandum is to initiate a review of current telemedicine access for patients in the Cherokee Nation Health System. Additionally it aims to assess opportunities for telemedicine access, as well as identify potential barriers to extending these services both within and beyond the Cherokee Nation Reservation.

I. Overview: Cherokee Nation is a Leader in Telemedicine

Cherokee Nation's health system, the largest in Indian Country, is a leader in telemedicine in Indian Country delivering essential healthcare services across our reservation. Each year thousands of patients benefit from the convenience and accessibility of Cherokee Nation's telemedicine, reinforcing its position as a key provider of innovative healthcare solutions.

II. Elected Leadership can better support continued telemedicine expansion by gaining a deeper understanding of the current accessibility to telemedicine for patients along with identifying opportunities, and barriers for future growth.

Cherokee Nation's commitment to excellence in health care requires a broad understanding of our growing and increasingly complex health system by not only health care staff and leadership but also by-elected and appointed leadership outside of our health system. Cherokee Nation leadership is deeply invested in the success of our health system, and every leader has the opportunity to support and strengthen it. Additionally,

citizens look to Cherokee Nation leadership to have sufficient depth of knowledge of the health system to answer questions and understand concerns.

Citizens' interest in accessing telemedicine through Cherokee Nation Health seems to be growing, and this interest is naturally shared by Cherokee Nation leadership. The rapid expansion of Cherokee Nation Health Services, including increased access to telemedicine, presents challenges for leaders outside the health system, as well as for citizens, in staying informed about current telemedicine services and understanding the opportunities and barriers to further expanding access.

To effectively support the continued growth of our Health System's telemedicine services, leadership needs an overview of the current state of telemedicine, as well as the opportunities and barriers to its future expansion.

III. Telemedicine Work Group

On the basis of the foregoing, I am directing a Work Group on Telemedicine. The Work Group is composed of:

- Health leadership and staff as designated by Dr. Jones
- Chief of Staff Corey Bunch or Designee
- Deputy Secretary of State Canaan Duncan

The Work Group shall draft and submit to the Principal Chief a brief report which outlines telemedicine related subjects as determined by Dr. Jones, but which should address these issues:

- What is the current state of telemedicine access to for our patients, by type of health service?
- What is the current state of telemedicine access for at-large Cherokee Nation citizens?
- What opportunities are on the horizon for expanding access to telemedicine?
- What barriers exist to expanding access to telemedicine? Analysis of barriers would include:
 - Technological or other infrastructure-related barriers.
 - Legal and regulatory barriers.
 - Unique barriers to Cherokee Nation citizens living at-large.

The Work Group described herein is not a public body within the meaning of Cherokee Nation FOIA, but the report or a summary thereof will be disclosed to members of the Council of the Cherokee Nation and to the general public as the Principal Chief directs. The report should be submitted by July 1, 2025, or by an approved deadline extension.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chuck Hoskin, Jr.
Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation